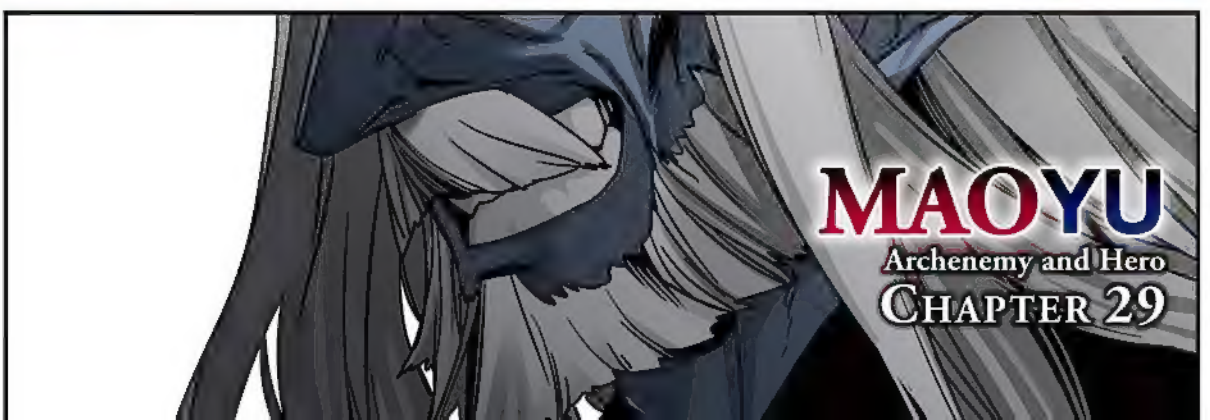
Art by
AKIRA ISHIDA

Original Work by
MAMARE TOUNO

Character Design by KEINOJOU MIZUTAMA and toi8

THE DEMON QUEEN ...
...HAS BEEN SHOT ?!


MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
CHAPTER 29

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"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"
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Archenemy and Hero CHAPTER 29
The Seal King of the Blue Demons

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MAOYU

VOLUME 9

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CHAPTER 29 Archenemy and Hero 001

The Seal King of the Blue Demons

CHAPTER 30 Archenemy and Hero 061

The Demon Queen is the True Hero

CHAPTER 31 Archenemy and Hero 117

We are the Crimson Youth

MAOYU

Archenemy and Hero

"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"

Volume 9

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COLUMN PAGE
Daisuke Takenouchi (Recca-sha)
Masataka Nomura

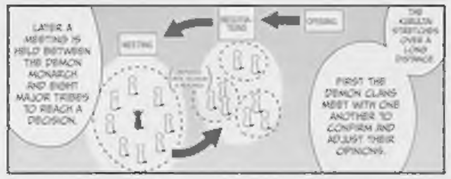
on war, demands the dethronement of the Demon Queen based on legal precedence. The meeting ends up back where it started, and the Demon Queen is in danger of losing her position.

As the Demon Queen is the subject of the discussion, she is forbidden from speaking and completely unable to act. Just when she thought she was done for, the Commander of the Eastern Fortress, human representative of Gateway City, appears at the meeting.

WITH THE WAR AGAINST HUMANS, DESTRUC-TION OF THE GATE...
...AND OTHER THREATS TO THE SPIRIT WORLD, WE MUST QUESTION THE CAPACITY OF THE MONARCH WE SERVE.
DEMON QUEEN, DURING YOUR REIGN, YOU NEVER EXPERIENCED WAR.
ISN'T THAT COR-RECT?

The Demon Queen and Hero stand in shock the Commander of the Eastern Fortress asks to participate in the meeting as the chief of the Gateway Clan. Following demon law, the Commander of the Eastern Tower becomes a member of the meeting with the backing of Archduke Fire Dragon and the Ogre Call Priestess, and the Demon Queen manages to keep her position.

Having survived the crisis, the Demon Queen and her companions breathe a sigh of relief. However, as the Demon Queen leaves the meeting, a single poisoned arrow comes flying towards her. Struck by the arrow, the Demon Queen collapses...


LATER A MEETING IS HELD BETWEEN THE DEMON MONARCH AND EIGHT MAJOR TRIBES TO REACH A DECISION.
MEETING
OPENING
THE GOBLIN STRETCHES OVER A LONG DISTANCE
FIRST THE DEMON CLANS MEET WITH ONE ANOTHER TO CONFIRM AND ADJUST THEIR OPINIONS.

In order to truly end the war between humans and demons, the Demon Queen and Hero begin working together. More than two years have passed since they began working out of Overwinter Village in the Human World, and its effects have become apparent in the Human World. The knowledge and technology the Demon Queen introduced to the Winter Kingdom as the Crimson Scholar have spread to the neighboring Iron and Ice Kingdoms, improving the lives of their people. The three kingdoms, which have been gradually growing in strength, decide to free themselves from their exploitation by the Holy Kingdom and establish the Three Kingdom Trade Alliance. The trade alliance, preparing themselves for an inevitable confrontation with the Central Continent led by the Holy Kingdom, also declare the Female Knight's Lakeside Convent the national religion of their kingdoms and begin working towards true independence.

In response to this situation, the Merchant's Alliance, the Human World's largest

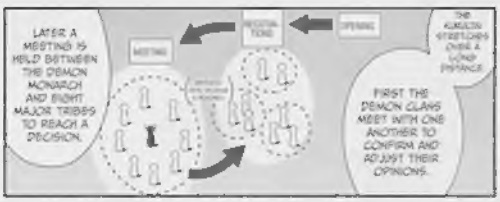
economic organization, begins moving as well. Led by the Young Merchant, the Alliance lays plans for a two major currency system using wheat. Additionally, after a chance meeting with Princess Fire Dragon, he negotiates with Archduke Fire Dragon directly to begin trading with the Spirit World.

As the Human World begins to stir, the Demon Queen returns to the Spirit World with the Hero disguised as the Black Knight and the Chief Maid. She holds a Kurultai, a grand conference of demons, and appeals to the chiefs of the eight major clans to end the war against humans. Though many chiefs are reluctant to end hostilities, with the help of the Black Knight and Chief Maid, the Demon Queen tries to convince the chiefs to change their minds.

Through their efforts, the meeting seems to lean toward a cease fire, but the Blue Demon King, who is bent

SUMMARY OF MAOYU VOLUME 8

Lectures on Archenemy and Hero
Outline of volume.8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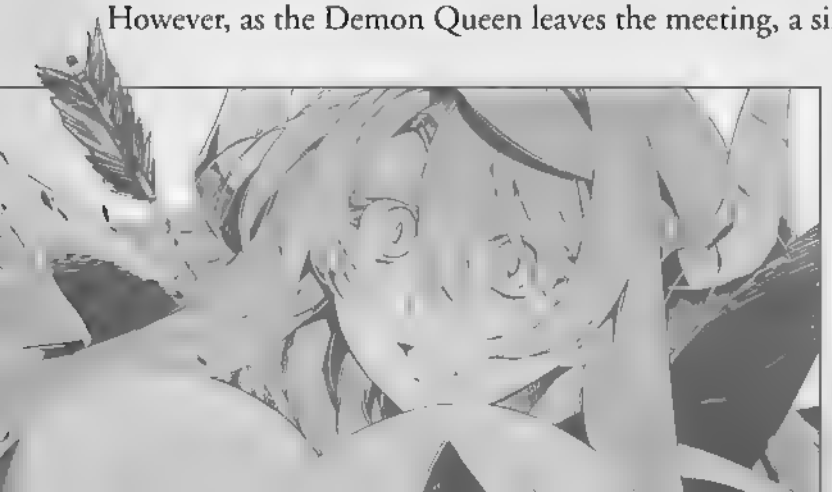

THE HERO

A young man who resolved to work alongside the Demon Queen. In order to make her dreams reality, he travels back and forth between various regions. In the Spirit World he operates as the Demon Queen's adviser, the Black Knight, and he stands by her side throughout the Kurultai.

THE FEMALE KNIGHT

One of the Hero's former traveling companions. Though she is aware of the Demon Queen's true identity, she remains a sympathetic supporter. She and the Demon Queen are romantic rivals and friends.

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One of the Hero's former traveling companions. She belongs to the same clan as the Demon Queen. She is a powerful magic user and supports the Demon Queen and Hero with her knowledge.

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Chief of the Humanoid Demon Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. As the largest clan of the Spirit World, the opinions and positions of its members are varied, and he constantly maintains his neutrality.

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Chief of the Giant Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. In contrast with his giant body, his personality is rather mild. However, his feelings towards humans are not positive.

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Chief of the Mechanical Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. His desire for the mineral resources of the Human World makes him support the war against humans.

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The queen of demons working to truly end the war between demons and humans. In order to convince the demon clans to cease fighting with humans, she decides to organize a Kurultai. She is trying to win the chiefs over to her side.

THE CHIEF MAID

Has been caring for the Demon Queen since she was a child. She desires happiness for the Demon Queen and works to make the Demon Queen's dream come true.

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Chief of the Dragon Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. He thinks highly of the Black Knight for defeating him and taking back Gateway City just as he promised.

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Former captain of the Holy Key Expeditionary Force At the Kurultai, he names himself the chief of the Gateway Clan composed primarily of the residents of Gateway City.

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Son of the Blue Demon King. Seals indicating his candidacy for the throne have appeared in both of his eyes. He displays an insolent attitude towards the Blue Demon King

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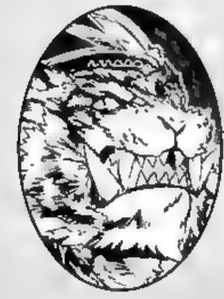
Chief of the Blue Demon Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. Upon learning a seal has appeared on the prince, he plans to dethrone the Demon Queen to put a member of his own clan on the throne.



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Chief of the Fanged Demon Clan, one of eight major demon clans of the Spirit World. As the leader of a clan that emphasizes strength, Duke Silver Tiger himself is a powerful fighter.

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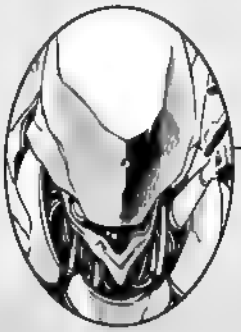

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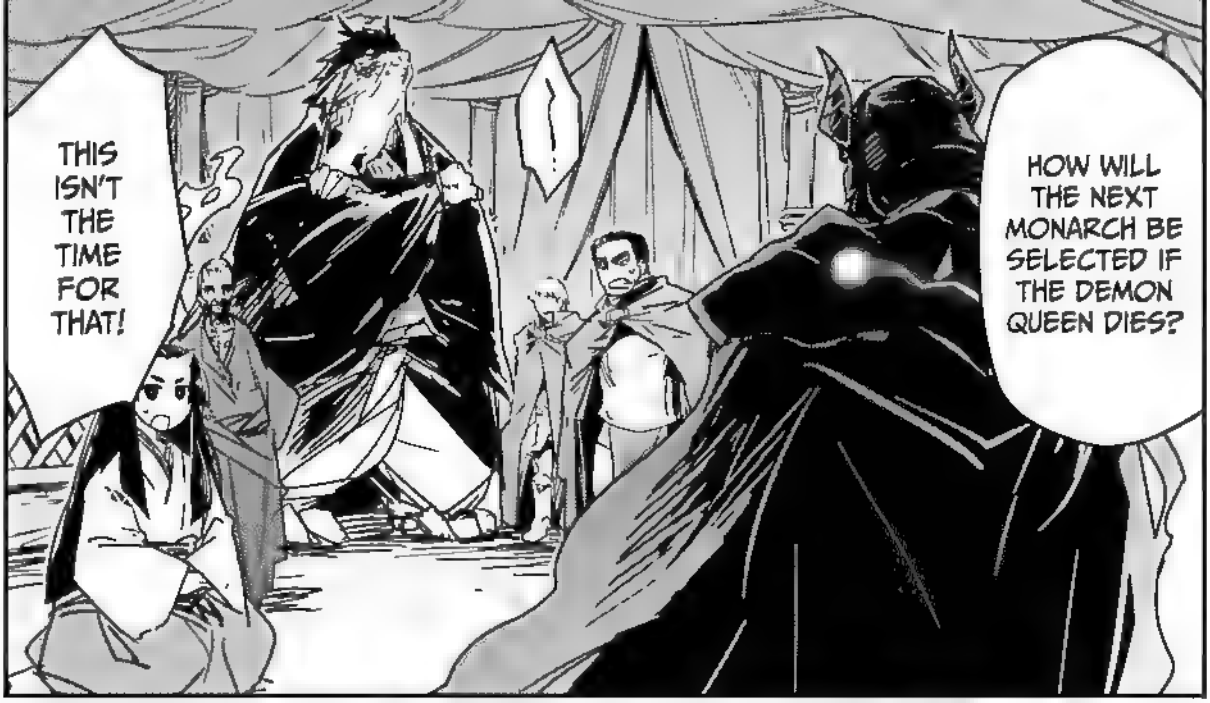
RUSTLE
THUD
THUD
THUD
IS IT TRUE THE DEMON QUEEN WAS SHOT?
IS THE DEMON QUEEN ALL RIGHT?
PLEASE BE QUIET.
IT'S TRUE.
SHE'S BEING TREATED INSIDE.

THE ARROW PIERCED HER LUNG.
SHE COULD DIE AT ANY MOMENT.
THOUGH THE BLACK KNIGHT'S MAGIC IS KEEPING HER ALIVE...
...THE ARROW WAS POI-SONED.

A PATTERNED CHANTER AND OGRE CALL HEALER ARE TREATING HER...
...BUT THE WOUND IS TOO DEEP, AND THE POISON IS TOO STRONG.
WHO DID THIS AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
A DEMON MONARCH HAS NEVER BEEN SHOT AT A KURULTAI BEFORE.

ALL DEMONS KNOW THIS.
SHOOTING THE DEMON QUEEN IN THIS MANNER...
...IS A DISGRACEFUL AND DISHONORABLE ACT.
PERHAPS...
...IT WAS A HUMAN.
BUT ...
SO...
...IT IS NATURAL FOR US TO SUSPECT A HUMAN ASSASSIN SHOT HER.
RUSTLE
IT MAY BE SOMEONE WHO BELIEVED ...
...THEY WERE REMOVING AN OBSTACLE IN THEIR WAY.
NO.
THAT THINKING POINTS ALL THE MORE TO A DEMON ASSASSIN.

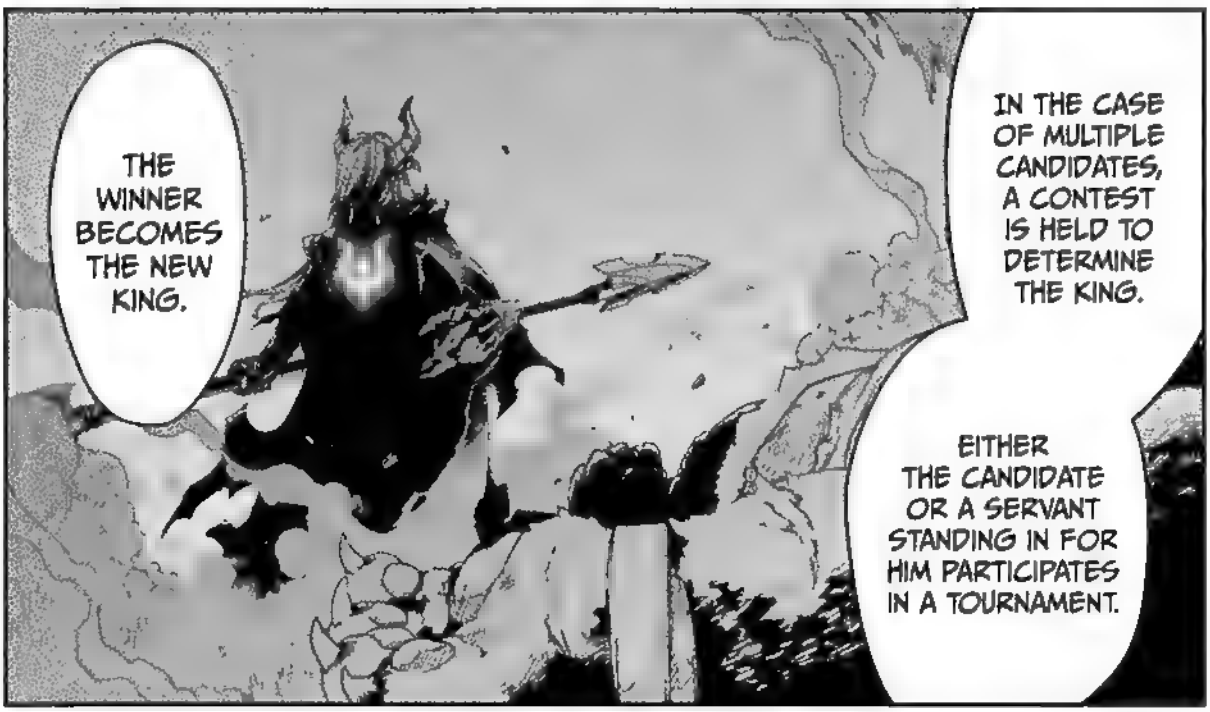
HOW IS THE DEMON QUEEN?
BLACK KNIGHT!
!
THE NEXT TWO DAYS ARE CRITICAL.
THE NECRO-SIS IS SEVERE.
...BUT DON'T GO INSIDE.
THE CHIEF MAID IS WITH HER NOW...


THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR THAT!
HOW WILL THE NEXT MONARCH BE SELECTED IF THE DEMON QUEEN DIES?

TELL ME.

THE STARS CHOOSE CANDIDATES.
A SEAL APPEARS SOME-WHERE ON A CANDI-DATE'S BODY.
IT IS SAID THE LARGER AND CLEARER THE SEAL...
...THE BETTER ONE IS SUITED TO BECOMING THE DEMON MONARCH.

IF ONLY ONE DEMON POSSESSES A SEAL, HE BECOMES KING.
HOW-EVER...
...IN MOST CASES MULTIPLE CANDIDATES APPEAR.


IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE CANDIDATES, A CONTEST IS HELD TO DETERMINE THE KING.
EITHER THE CANDIDATE OR A SERVANT STANDING IN FOR HIM PARTICIPATES IN A TOURNAMENT.
THE WINNER BECOMES THE NEW KING.

I SEE.
TURN
HEY!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, BLACK KNIGHT?
TO FULFILL THE DEMON QUEEN'S WILL.

WHOOSH
EVERY SECOND THE DEMON QUEEN'S LIFE BURNS AWAY...
...IS MORE VALUABLE THAN A BIT OF GOLD.
WE CAN'T AFFORD DELAYS IF WE WANT TO STOP THIS WAR.

YES! SIR!
SHOW ME THE WAY!
WHOOSH

IT'S ONE OF THE HILLS TO THE NORTH-EAST.
HAVE YOU FOUND THE LOCA-TION?

WHOOSH

FLOAT
NIGHT-MARE SPAR-ROW!
I AM HERE, SIR.

THEY SHOT HER FROM HERE.
YES.
MEMBERS OF THE FAIRY CLAN ARE WATCHING THE KURULTAI GROUNDS.
NO ONE WILL ESCAPE UNNOTICED.
MAS-TER.
!
IN DAN-GER.
GOOD. KEEP IT UP.
HOW IS THE DEMON QUEEN?

I'VE GOT A LOT OF QUESTIONS FOR THEM.
THEY'RE WORKING IN A GROUP.
WHILE SEARCHING ESCAPE ROUTES, WE DISCOVERED EVIDENCE OF MULTIPLE MEN.
THE CULPRIT IS LIKELY OPERATING WITH A GROUP OF UP TO 10 MEN.
I ALSO...
...DISCOVERED SOME STRANGE TRACES.
I FAINTLY SENSE MAGIC
ARE THESE ...
... TRACES OF A BATTLE ?

"AN ARROW IN THE SHAD-OWS."
IT'S THE OLD MAN.

あ
AAARGH
GROAN
アア
イイ
SHRIEK
MOAN
おおお
RUSTLE

THEY RAISED THE BLACK FLAG.
THE BLACK FLAG OF MOURNING SIGNALS THE DEATH OF A CLAN CHIEF.
IF IT'S BEEN RAISED OVER THE DEMON QUEEN'S TENT...
...IT SIGNI-FIES THE DEATH OF THE DEMON QUEEN.
IT SEEMS THE DEMON QUEEN IS DEAD.
SHE WOULD HAVE LIVED IF SHE HAD HEEDED MY ADVICE AND STEPPED DOWN FROM THE THRONE.
CHUCKLE
WHAT A FOOL-ISH WOMAN.
RUSTLE
EXCUSE ME.

THE DEMON QUEEN SEEMS TO HAVE DIED.
WHAT A WELL TIMED INCIDENT.
I WISH I COULD SHARE A DRINK WITH WHO-EVER WAS BEHIND THIS.

CHUCKLE
WHO KNOWS ?
I HAVE NO IDEA.
HISS
WHEEZE

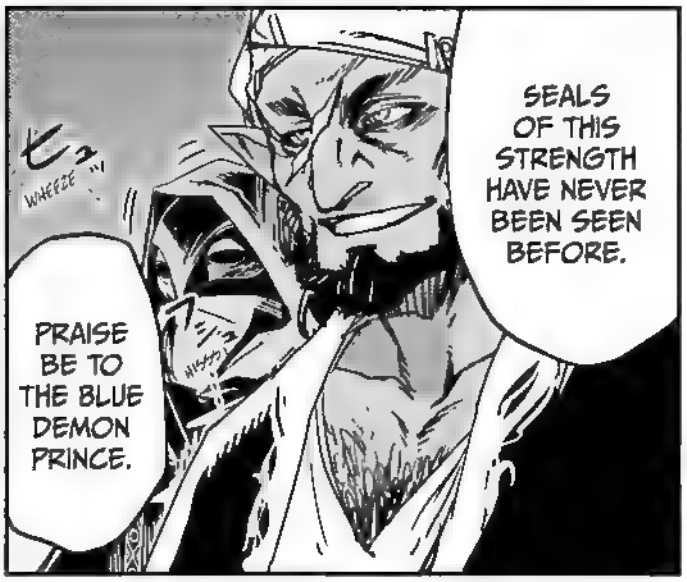
DO YOU KNOW ANY-THING...
... PRINCE ?

GLOW

ANYWAY, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS, BLUE DEMON KING.
BLUE DEMON EXECUTIVE GENERAL

GLOW
THEY'RE SHINING BRIGHTER THAN EVER.
TWO SEALS OF THE DEMON MONARCH.

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
WHAT AUSPICIOUS NEWS!
MY REIGN IS FINALLY COMPLETE!


WHEEZE
SEALS OF THIS STRENGTH HAVE NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE.
PRAISE BE TO THE BLUE DEMON PRINCE.

HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
THE GREEN LIGHT OF OUR SUN IS MOST FITTING FOR THE BLUE DEMON CLAN.
THE SAME YEAR I ACQUIRE A SEAL PRINCE, THE DEMON QUEEN DIES.
IT IS PROOF OUR GOD FAVORS THE BLUE DEMON CLAN!

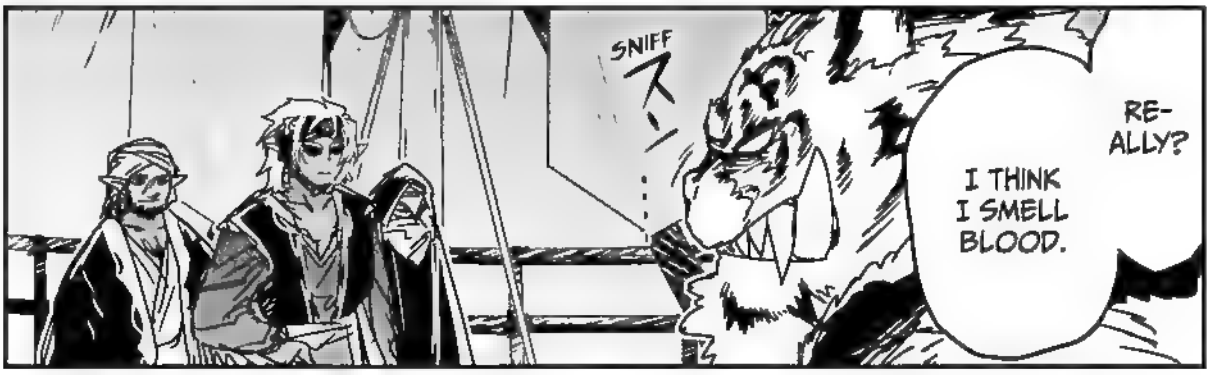
I WILL SHOULDER THE GREAT RESPONSI-BILITY...
...OF LEADING THE BLUE DEMON CLAN.
HOW-EVER...
...IT WOULDN'T DO TO REMAIN A PRINCE FOREVER.
?
.....
STAB
CLANG

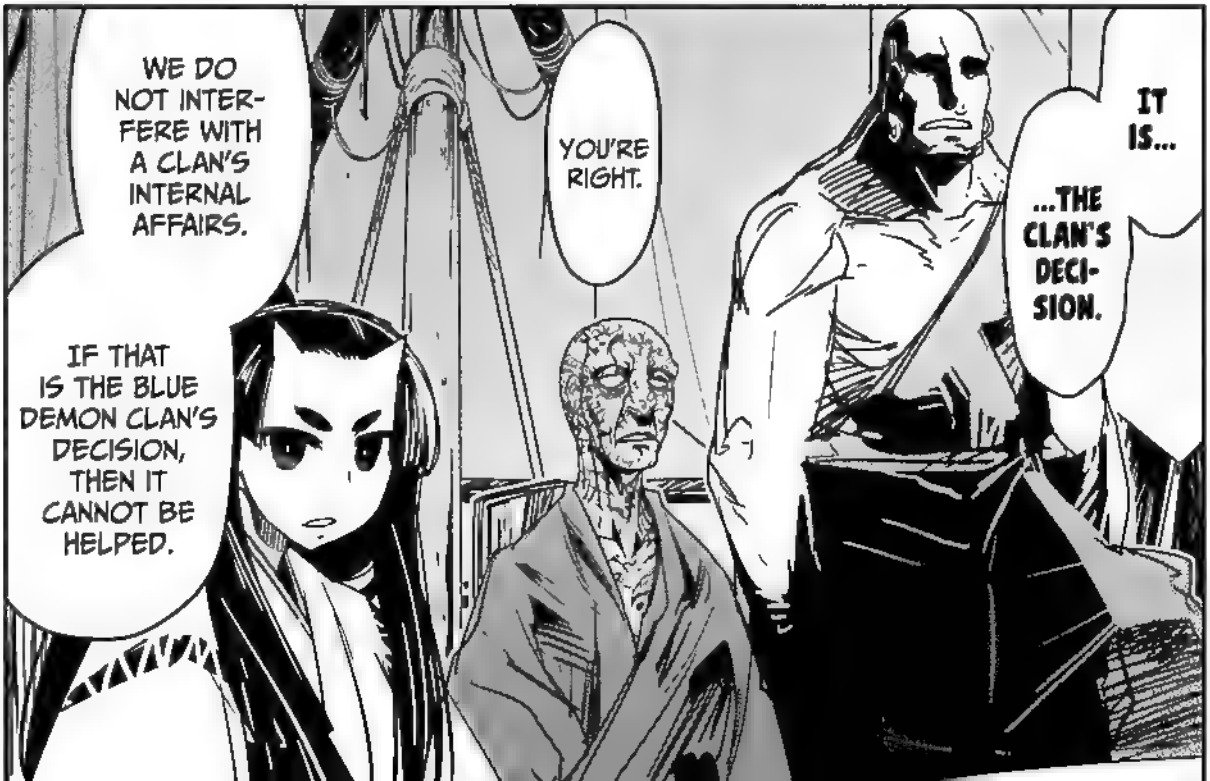
SLASH
YOU ...
...BAS-TARD!
BURN
IT'S OVER, NEW BLUE DEMON KING.
NO, SEAL KING.
SEAL KING, HUH?

IT'S NOT BAD, BUT I HAVE ANOTHER NAME WAITING FOR ME.
I WILL BECOME THE NEXT DEMON KING.
SEAL KING OF THE BLUE DEMONS

THANK YOU FOR COMING.
WE HAVE GATHERED THE CLAN CHIEFS TO SEEK THEIR ADVICE ON HOW TO ESCAPE FROM THIS PREDICAMENT.
...IN A TRULY UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT IS A TERRIBLE BLOW TO US.
THE LOSS OF THE DEMON QUEEN...
THE BLUE DEMON CLAN HAS A NEW CHIEF.
PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
I AM THE EXECUTIVE GENERAL WHO COMMANDS THE SOLDIERS OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN.
WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE IS THE BLUE DEMON KING?

LAST NIGHT MY FATHER, THE BLUE DEMON KING, PASSED AWAY DUE TO A SUDDEN SPASMODIC FIT.
ACCORDING TO MY FATHER'S WILL, I HAVE BECOME THE NEW CHIEF OF THE BLUE DEMONS.
THE CLAN SUPPORTS MY SUCCESSION.
STEP


SNIFF
I THINK I SMELL BLOOD.
RE-ALLY?

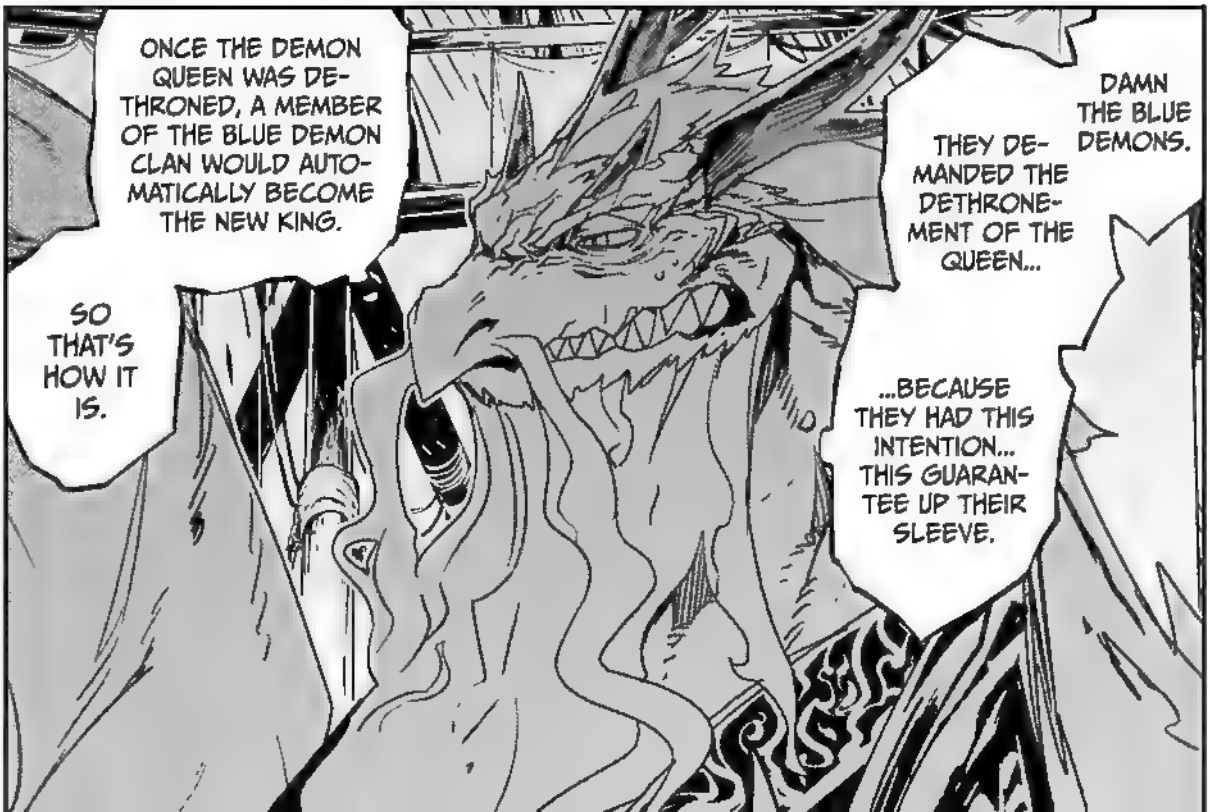

WE DO NOT INTER-FERE WITH A CLAN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
IF THAT IS THE BLUE DEMON CLAN'S DECISION, THEN IT CANNOT BE HELPED.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT IS...
...THE CLAN'S DECI-SION.

THE STARS WILL DECIDE ...
...THE NEXT DEMON MON-ARCH.
NOW, THEN.
I BELIEVE YOU'RE ALL AWARE THE DEMON QUEEN HAS PASSED AWAY.
I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR HOW YOU INTEND TO HANDLE THE FUTURE.
BUT THE TIMING IS AN ISSUE.
THE SPIRIT WORLD IS CURRENTLY AT WAR WITH THE HUMAN WORLD.
THE DEMON QUEEN PASSED AWAY BEFORE SHE COULD DECIDE WHETHER WE WOULD CEASE OR CONTINUE HOSTILITIES.
IF WE WASTE TIME FAILING TO INSTATE A NEW KING, THE SPIRIT WORLD WILL BE IN DANGER.

YOU WANT THE NINE OF US TO MAKE A DECISION?
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, THEN?
BEEP
WILL WE CONTINUE THE KURULTAI WITHOUT A KING?
BZZ
BZZ
THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST TELL YOU.
I HAVE SEALS IN BOTH OF MY EYES.
GLOW
CHATTER
NORMALLY A CANDI-DATE HAS ONLY ONE SEAL!
IM-POS-SIBLE ...
MURMUR
BOTH EYES?

ACTUALLY, NOW THAT THE CURRENT QUEEN IS DEAD...
...I AM PRACTICALLY THE NEW DEMON KING.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I AM ALMOST CERTAINLY THE NEXT KING.

...THERE ARE NO OTHER CANDIDATES AT THIS MOMENT.
AS FAR AS THE BLUE DEMON CLAN KNOWS...


ONCE THE DEMON QUEEN WAS DE-THRONED, A MEMBER OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN WOULD AUTO-MATICALLY BECOME THE NEW KING.
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS.
DAMN THE BLUE DEMONS.
THEY DE-MANDED THE DETHRONE-MENT OF THE QUEEN...
...BECAUSE THEY HAD THIS INTENTION... THIS GUARAN-TEE UP THEIR SLEEVE.

UNTIL I RECEIVE YOUR SUPPORT...
...I WON'T CONSIDER MYSELF THE DEMON KING.
I KNOW THAT.
I AM STILL YOUNG.
BUT YOU'RE STILL ONLY A CANDIDATE.
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHAT...
...DO YOU WANT?
HMPH.
AS THE CHIEF OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN AND CANDIDATE FOR THE THRONE, I WISH TO TELL YOU THE FOLLOWING.

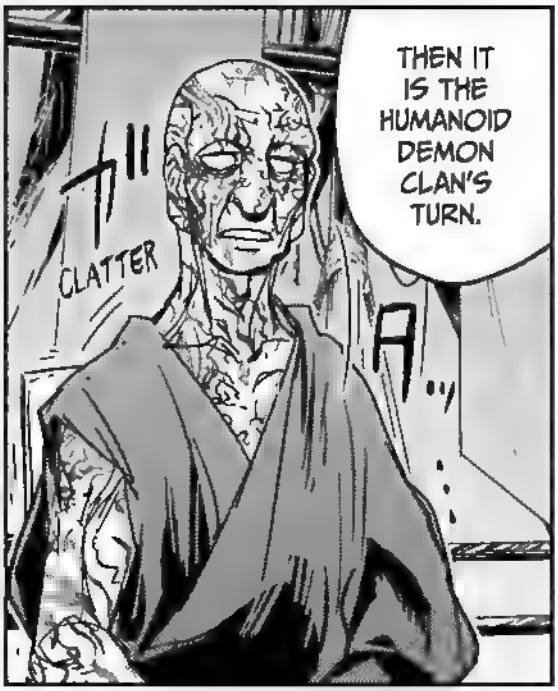
FIRST, WE ARE IN A STATE OF EMERGENCY.
THE THRONE SHOULD NOT REMAIN EMPTY.
THE DEMONS MUST BE UNITED UNDER A NEW KING QUICKLY.
SECOND, WE MUST HOLD A FUNERAL FOR THE LATE DEMON QUEEN.
WE MUST ALSO FIND THE MAN WHO MURDERED THE QUEEN.
THE BLUE DEMON CLAN BELIEVES HUMANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS ASSASSINATION.
THAT'S SPECULATION!
SLAM

OF COURSE, WE HAVE NO PROOF CURRENTLY.
IT'S POS-SIBLE DEMONS ARE RESPON-SIBLE.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A COWARDLY TACTIC MEANT TO DIVIDE THE DEMONS.
WE MUST HUNT DOWN THE CULPRIT AND CAPTURE HIM.
IT'S SOME-THING THEY WOULD DO!
HARRUMPH
BEEP
A HUMAN...
BIZ
AS I EXPLAINED IN MY FIRST POINT, TIME IS PRECIOUS.
THE STARS MAY BESTOW ADDITIONAL SEALS TO OTHER CANDIDATES IN THE FUTURE.
THIRD, I MUST ASK YOU...
...HOW LONG MUST I WAIT?

IT IS THE RESPONSI-BILITY OF THE EIGHT MAJOR CLANS...
...THOUGH I SUPPOSE IT IS THE NINE MAJOR CLANS NOW...
...TO DETERMINE WHEN THE CANDIDATE'S TOURNAMENT WILL BE HELD.
I ASK THAT YOU MAKE YOUR DE-CISION.

WHICH CLAN IS MEANT TO ORGANIZE THE NEXT TOURNA-MENT?
WE DID IT LAST TIME.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR DECISION.

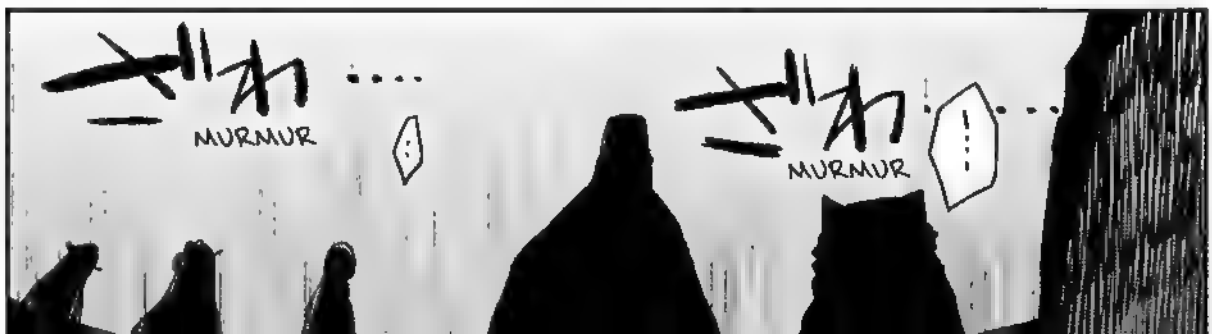

THEN IT IS THE HUMANOID DEMON CLAN'S TURN.
CLATTER

WE ARE IN A TIME OF CRISIS.
WE NEED A NEW DEMON KING.
WE WILL HOLD IT IMMEDIATELY.

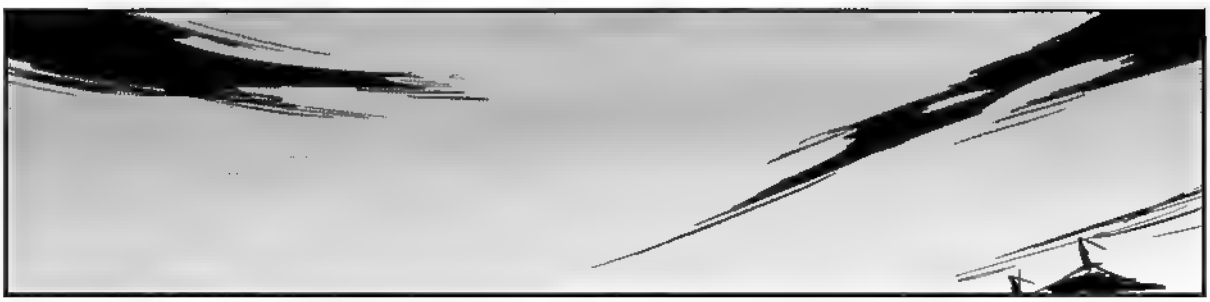
PATTERNED CHIEF, WHAT IS YOUR DECISION?

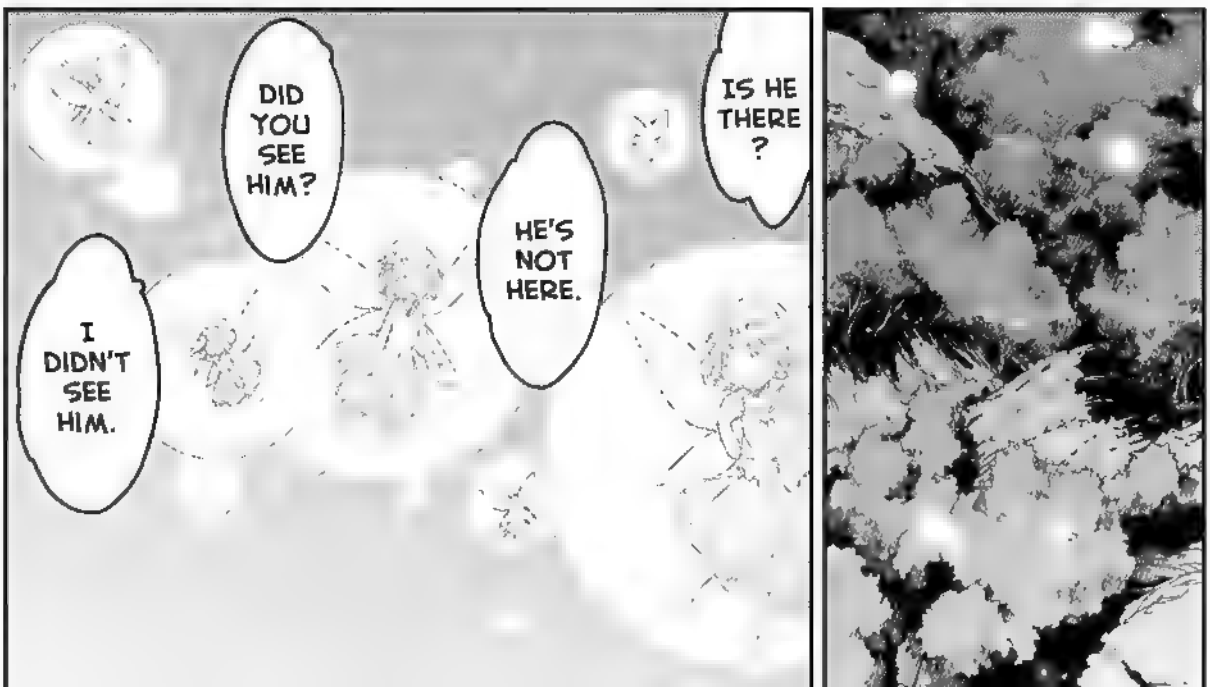
SHOULD NO OTHER SEAL BEARING CANDIDATES COME FORWARD BY THAT TIME...
...THE NEW KING OF THE BLUE DEMONS WILL BECOME THE DEMON KING.

TOMORROW MORNING.
YES.
THE CANDIDATE'S TOURNAMENT WILL BE HELD TOMORROW MORNING.


MURMUR
MURMUR

THE PITCH-BLACK ARMOR ENVELOPING YOUR BODY...
...WAS ONCE WORN BY A CONQUEROR KNOWN AS THE DEMON KING OF THE SWORD.
YOU ARE THE DEMON MONARCH'S RIGHT HAND.
BLACK KNIGHT.
WHAT IS IT?
YOU ARE OUR FINAL FORTRESS STANDING AGAINST THE INVASION OF THE HEINOUS HUMANS.
...YOU ARE THE STRONGEST KNIGHT OF THE SPIRIT WORLD.
THOUGH THE DEMON QUEEN'S DEATH IS CAUSE FOR GREAT SORROW...
...AND BECOME THE PILLAR OF THE SPIRIT WORLD ALONGSIDE ME.
I ASK THAT YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF...



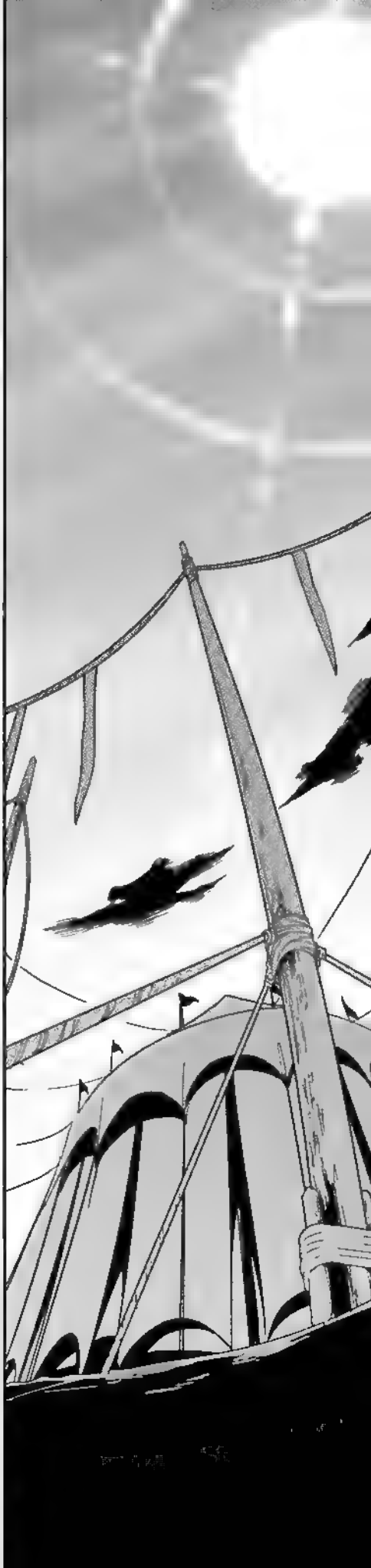

IS HE THERE?
DID YOU SEE HIM?
HE'S NOT HERE.
I DIDN'T SEE HIM.

SOL-
DIERS.
THERE
ARE
SOL-
DIERS.
THEY ARE
WAITING
WITH
BATED
BREATH.
THEY
ARE
HIDING.
BUT...
BUT...
SOME-
THING IS
HERE.
DANGER!
TELL THE
QUEEN!
WE
MUST
TELL HER!
WE
MUST
TELL THE
QUEEN!
THERE ARE
SOLDIERS
HIDING
IN THE
VALLEY!
WE MUST
TELL THE
QUEEN!

IT'S...
...MORN-
ING.
HMPH!
BURN

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO COME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.
NO ONE IS COMING.

HE'S RIGHT.
BLACK KNIGHT, TAKE OFF YOUR ARMOR.
THE DEMON QUEEN GAVE ME THIS ARMOR.



THE SUN SHINES BEAUTIFULLY GREEN AGAIN THIS MORNING.
VERY WELL.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
NEW KING OF THE BLUE DEMONS, STEP FOR-WARD.
STEP

IN ORDER TO BE OFFICIALLY DECLARED THE DEMON KING...
...YOU MUST SPEND FOUR DAYS...
...PURIFYING YOURSELF IN THE PALACE OF THE UNDERWORLD ON THE LOWEST FLOOR OF YOUR CASTLE.

I, THE PATTERNED CHIEF...
...AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NINE MAJOR CLANS OF THE KURULTAI...
...ACKNOWLEDGE YOU AS THE FINAL CANDIDATE.

HERE IS THE DEMON KING'S CROWN.

OF COURSE.
ARE YOU PREPARED TO LIVE YOUR LIFE AS THE DEMON KING?

WITH HUMILITY.

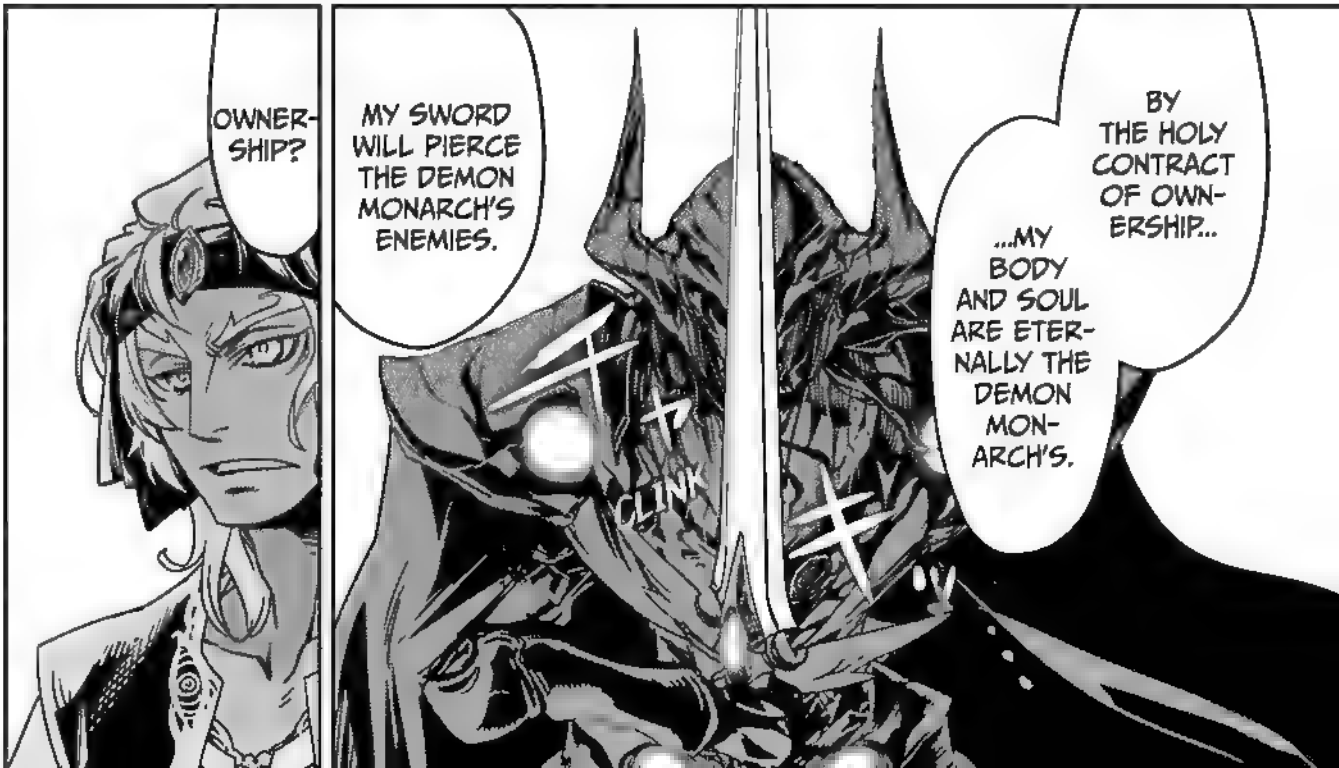
WILL YOU INHERIT THE POWERS OF THE DEMON MONARCHS?

AS MY RIGHT HAND MAN...
...AND FUTURE GOVERNOR OF THE ENTIRE SPIRIT WORLD...
...I WOULD LIKE TO GRANT THAT HONOR TO THE BLACK KNIGHT.
WHAT IS IT?
WAIT...
...PATTERNED CHIEF.
VERY WELL.
GO AHEAD, BLACK KNIGHT.
NOD

MY RIGHT HAND.
THE DEMON WORLD'S GREATEST KNIGHT AND INVINCIBLE BLACK GRIM REAPER.
I AM DELIGHTED TO HAVE YOU AS THE RIGHT HAND MAN OF MY MIGHTY REIGN.
I AM GRATEFUL TO THE FORMER DEMON QUEEN FOR THAT ALONE.

I UNDER-STAND.

FOR THE GLORY OF THE SPIRIT WORLD, OFFER YOUR SWORD TO THE DEMON KING...
...AND OBEY THE COMMANDS OF YOUR KING.


OWNER-SHIP?
MY SWORD WILL PIERCE THE DEMON MONARCH'S ENEMIES.
CLINK
BY THE HOLY CONTRACT OF OWN-ERSHIP...
...MY BODY AND SOUL ARE ETER-NALLY THE DEMON MON-ARCH'S.

MY VOICE IS THE MESSENGER FOLLOWING IN YOUR FOOTSTEPS.
MY STRENGTH IS THE ARMS OF THE DEMON MONARCH CARING FOR THE WEAK.
MY SKILLS ARE THE LIGHT SHINING UPON THE BOUNDLESS PATH OF THE DEMON MONARCH.
EVEN BEYOND THE LIMITS OF MY STRENGTH...
...I WILL WALK THIS LONG ROAD WITH THE DEMON MONARCH.

IN THE NAME OF THIS HOLY CONTRACT, ACCEPT THIS CROWN.
TAKE THIS CROWN OF THE DEMON MONARCH IN MY HANDS...
...AND CONTROL ITS CURSE AND DUTY WITH SELF-RESTRAINT.

STEP

CHEER

ROAR

HISS
LONG LIVE THE KING!
SNICKER
LONG LIVE THE KING!
SNEEZE

LONG LIVE THE BLUE DEMON KING!
LONG LIVE THE NEW DEMON KING!
CHEER

THEY DON'T CALL ME THE SUNSPOT SHOOTER FOR NOTHING.

MY LEG!
MY LEG!
AH!
URGH!
WHEEZE
CHATTER
WUMPH
MURMUR
MURMUR
?!
WHEEZE
HOOSH
DRAW
CLINK
STEP
WHO ARE YOU?
WHY HAVE YOU HARMED MY SERVANT?
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
?!
DON'T SCREAM SO LOUDLY.
IT'S SHAMEFUL.

AHA HA HA
IT'S DISGRACEFUL FOR ROYALTY TO LOSE THEIR SELF-CONTROL IN THE MIDDLE OF A CEREMONY.
I'M SORRY I KEPT YOU WAITING.
YOU'RE LATE, OLD MAN.
RUSTLE
WHAT'S GOING ON?

I WAS WAITING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONFIRM...
...YOU WERE HOLDING ONTO THIS.
LIFT
HISS
NO!
NOT THAT BOTTLE!
HISS
A BOTTLE?
IT'S NECROSIS POISON.
IT'S A HORRIFYING POISON.
ORDINARY ANTIDOTES ARE INEFFECTIVE AGAINST IT.
THIS POISON KILLED FIVE OF MY DEAR SUBORDINATES...
...I HAD INSTRUCTED TO PURSUE THE ASSASSIN.
COME TO THINK OF IT, I THINK THE SAME POISON WAS USED ON THE ARROW THAT STRUCK THE DEMON QUEEN.
.....

LET GO OF ME, OLD MAN!
HISS
I THINK WE'LL HAVE TO ASK THIS ASSASSIN FOR ANSWERS.
WHY IS THE POISON THAT KILLED THE DEMON QUEEN...
...IN THE POSSESSION OF A POISON MASTER OF THE BLUE DEMONS?
WHAT ?
STAB
I WAS JUST TRYING TO SAVE THIS OLD MAN.
OF COURSE NOT.
HE WAS AN IMPORTANT SUSPECT!
WERE YOU TRYING TO SILENCE HIM?
SLUMP

KING OF THE BLUE DEMONS!
YOU SAID THE ASSASSIN MUST BE CAPTURED AND QUESTIONED THOROUGHLY!
WHY WOULD YOU KILL A MAN WHO WAS UNDOUBTEDLY IN POSSESSION OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION?
HE'S RIGHT! SURELY YOU DON'T EXPECT US TO BELIEVE THAT!
?!
CLICK
RUSTLE
THIS ASSASSIN...
...BELONGED TO THE SNAKE CLAN.
THE SNAKE CLAN?
HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE FANGED DEMON CLAN?

NO!
WE WOULD NEVER DO THIS!
WE DID SEEK TO DEMON-STRATE OUR STRENGTH ON THE BATTLE-FIELD...
...BUT WE WOULD NEVER RESORT TO ASSAS-SINATION!
WHO WOULD BELIEVE THAT?
HA HA HA
CHUCKLE
THE SAME COULD BE SAID OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN!
BEEP
HE'S RIGHT!
THE SNAKE CLAN AS-SASSIN WAS IN THE BLUE DEMON'S CAMP!
YOU ARE NOT FREE FROM SUSPI-CION!
HAH

はHA はHA はHA はHA はHA はHA はHA

YOU SEEM CONFUSED.
HA HA HA.
SUSPICION?
EXCUSES?

I AM THE DEMON KING.
THE ONE AND ONLY KING. MY POWER IS SUPREME AND UNPARALLELED.
I RULE THE ENTIRE SPIRIT WORLD.
I WILL NOT LISTEN TO YOUR IMPERTINENCE ANY LONGER.

THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN REMAIN ON THE THRONE UNDER THIS SITUATION!
BUT THE DEMON MONARCH CAN BE DETHRONED WITH THE APPROVAL OF HALF THE KURULTAI CHIEFS!
!!
AS THE DEMON KING, I NOW ANNOUNCE THE END OF THE KURULTAI!
ADDI-TION-ALLY...
...ONLY THE DEMON KING CAN CALL FOR ANOTHER KURULTAI!

THE DEMON KING IS THE ORDER OF THE SPIRIT WORLD.
THE DEMON KING IS A RULER WHO TRANSCENDS THE LAW.

JUST SO YOU KNOW, I'LL NEVER CALL ANOTHER KURULTAI.
THIS IS NOTHING MORE THAN A MEETING OF THE WEAK THIRD-RATE DEMON MONARCHS RELY ON...
...BE-CAUSE THEY LACK THE STRENGTH TO FORCE THEIR OWN WILL.

THAT'S ALL.
WE'RE FINISHED HERE.

HA
HA
HA
?
THAT'S THE KIND OF THINKING I WANTED TO FIX.

THE END

CHAPTER 29
The Seal King of the Blue Demons

THE SUCCESSION OF POWER

For rulers reigning over nations, the succession of power is an incredibly delicate problem and the source of many headaches.

THE SUCCESSION OF POWER

Most historical nations that have risen to power were monarchies with a single powerful emperor or king at the top. In Europe, in addition to secular leaders, Christianity also existed as a societal norm, and the pope standing at the pinnacle of the church was also an influential figure.

THE WINNER BECOMES THE NEW KING.
IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE CANDIDATES, A CONTEST IS HELD TO DETERMINE THE KING.
EITHER THE CANDIDATE OR A SERVANT STANDING IN FOR HIM PARTICIPATES IN A TOURNAMENT.

In order to become the demon monarch, candidates with seals on their bodies must defeat one another to prove their strength.

Methods for succession of power can be broadly broken down into "hereditary systems" and "electoral systems." In hereditary systems, members of the ruler's family such as children or siblings would inherit their power, and blood relations were the basis of authority. When kings fulfilled a religious function, kings were often deified as the embodiment of gods or living deities. Because individuals unrelated to previous rulers had hardly any grounds to be recognized as legitimate successors, hereditary systems were adopted to establish a sense of justice or morality. The pharaohs of Egypt are a typical example of a hereditary system.

On the other hand, electoral systems involve voting to determine the succession of power. Before the spread of republicanism in Europe, the Roman Kingdom, the Holy Roman Empire, and Kingdom of Hungary used electoral systems. The Catholic pope is also an elected figure, and even the Kurultai, the highest organ of decision making in the Mongolian Empire, elected the emperor. However, only nobility or certain members of the population were allowed to vote, making it different from modern elections. Additionally, votes swung heavily in favor of influential individuals, and ultimately a single family would remain in power, making it largely the same as a hereditary system.

The Blue Demon King was assassinated by the Blue Demon Prince. Usurpation is another method of succession of power.

In addition, sometimes the previous leader would appoint his successor instead of conducting an election as was the case during the beginning of the Roman Empire.

While these are normal methods of succession of power, sometimes power was taken through rebellions or usurpation of the throne. For example, in the Middle East after the Eastern Roman Empire was divided, beginning with Magnentius, who killed Constantius I and usurped the throne, several emperors usurped the throne. Additionally, major wars such as the war for royal succession of the Mongolian Empire would sometimes break out, making succession of power a source of headaches for statesmen as well.

THINKING

HEY.
DO YOU ENJOY LIVING HERE?
COME ON.
YOU'RE STARING OFF INTO SPACE.
OH.
RIGHT.
SORRY.
SISTER?
SISTER!
I ENJOY IT EVERY DAY.
I LOVE WORK-ING!
IT'S WARM, OUR BEDS ARE SOFT...
...AND WE GET TO EAT EVERY DAY.
I LIKE THE MISTRESS AND THE LADY WITH GLASSES AND THE HERO TOO.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I LOVE YOU TOO.
I LOVE YOU MOST OF ALL, SISTER.
I KNOW.
I LOVE YOU TOO.

"WHY" IS QUITE THE GREETING.
WERE YOU THAT CONFIDENT IN THE POISON YOU USED AGAINST ME?
AS YOU CAN SEE, I MAY NOT BE IN THE BEST CONDITION, BUT I'M STILL ALIVE.
NATURALLY I HAVE NO INTENTION OF HANDING THE THRONE OVER TO YOU.

MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
Chapter 30

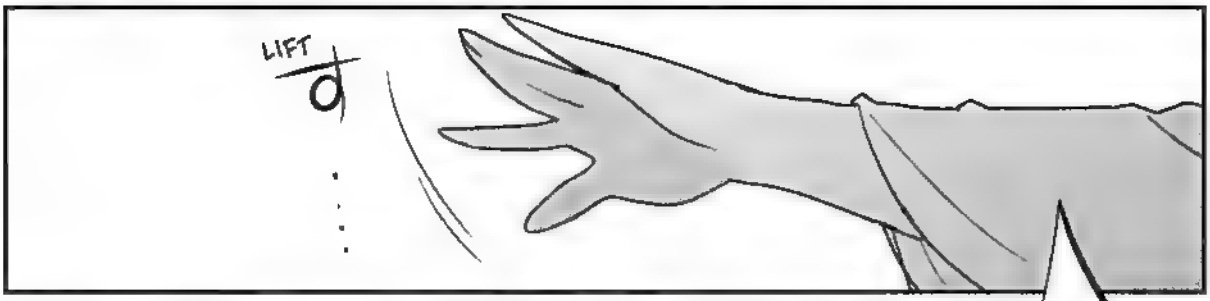
BUT...
...YOU TRUSTED ME NONE-THELESS.
I'M SORRY FOR SUS-PECTING YOU.
SCHOL-AR.

THAT OLD MAN WOULD NEVER KILL ANYONE LARGER THAN A D-CUP!
ONLY BECAUSE THE HERO SEEMED SO EARNEST.

STEP
GRIND
CLEACH
I DO CONSIDER MYSELF A GENTLE-MAN.
にょほほほほ
AHA HA HA HA

CHAPTER 30 Archenemy and Hero
The Demon Queen is the True Hero

MY BLADE WILL PIERCE ANYONE AT HER COMMAND.
MY SWORD BELONGS TO THE DEMON QUEEN.


LIFT
d

SEIZE THE KING OF BLUE DEMONS!
IF HE RESISTS, SHOW NO MERCY!

BURN
DON'T ...
... UNDER-ESTI-MATE ME!

ROAR
DON'T BE RIDICU-LOUS. THIS IS A FARCE.
I AM THE ONLY DEMON WORTHY OF BEING KING.
LOOK AT THE SEALS IN MY EYES.
MY STRENGTH SURPASSES THAT OF THAT WOMAN AND EVERY OTHER DEMON!
BUT YOU'RE NOT THE DEMON KING.
YOU'RE ONLY A CANDIDATE FOR THE THRONE.
IN THAT CASE ...
...I WILL TAKE THE THRONE BY FORCE.

KILL THE DEMON QUEEN!
ROAR
CLANK
DASH
DRAW
RUMBLE

CLANG

CHANG

RUMBLE
SLASH
SLING
CLING
BOOM
HA!
TSK
SNAP
HA HA HA!
YOU'RE STRONG, BLACK KNIGHT!
YOU TRULY ARE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR OF THE SPIRIT WORLD!
HA HA HA!
HA!
HA HA HA!

WUM
WUM
WUM
HUMMM
KABOOM
WHOOSH!
WHOOSH

FWISH
FWISH
CRACK!!
BOOM
CRASH
CLANG
CRACK
CRACK
BOOM
...IS AS STRONG AS A REAL DEMON KING!
THIS GUY...
HOW ENTER-TAIN-ING...
... BLACK KNIGHT !
HA
HA
HA!
HA!
CLANG
CLANG"!!
KA-BOOM

THE SPIRIT WORLD BELONGS TO MY MASTER!
CA-CAW!
YOU SHALL NOT PASS!
THE CORPSE SPARROW
I MUST GO TO THE AID OF MY MASTER!
GET OUT OF MY WAY!
THERE'S NO END TO THEM.
DAMN IT!
THEY HAD ALL THESE SOLDIERS HIDDEN!
CLANG
CLING
!!
AIM FOR THE DEMON QUEEN!
AR-CHERS, READY!
DRAW
DRAW
DRAW
DRAW
RUSTLE

?
WHUD
WHUD
WHUD
FWISH
STRAIN!
FIRE!
RUSTLE!
FWISH

ARGH
MOAN
GROAN
.....

HIM!
THEY WERE SHOT? BY WHO?

POINT AN ARROW AT THOSE BREASTS ...
...AT THE DEMON QUEEN, AND YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE ME.
HE'S IN THE OPEN!
AIM FOR THE OLD MAN!
RUSTLE
WHOOSH
WHUD
WHUD
WHUD
YOU'RE HARDLY SECOND RATE.
...!

ISN'T HE A LEGENDARY ARCHER?
HE'S NOT HOLDING ANYTHING
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM HOLD ANYTHING.
WHAT IS THE OLD MAN DOING?
HE MUST BE SHOOTING THEM DOWN.

HIS ENEMIES DIE AS THOUGH THEY WERE PIERCED BY ARROWS.
THEN WHY IS HE AN ARCHER?

BUT ...
... THIS ENDS NOW!
I'M IMPRESSED, BLACK KNIGHT!
I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE THIS STRONG!
BOOM
KABOOM
WUM
WUM
WUM
!!
HE INTENDS TO INCINERATE THIS BATTLEFIELD, ALLIES AND ALL!
IT'S A LARGE-SCALE DESTRUCTION SPELL!

HA HA HA!

ROAR

BOOM

NO, YOU DON'T!

HA HA HA!

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

BURN

CRACKLE

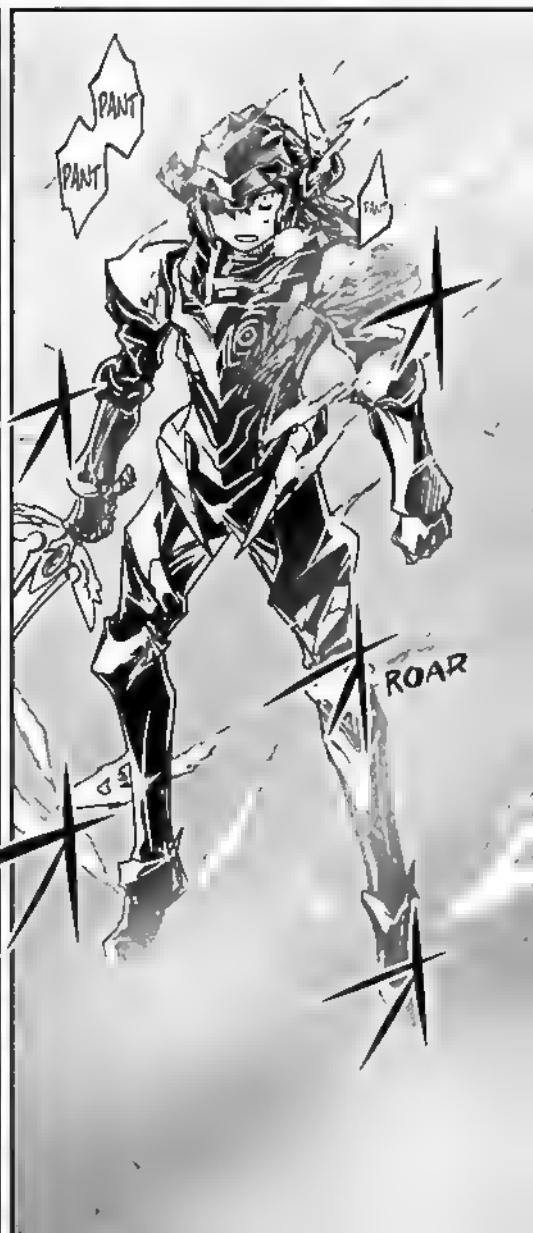
BOOM
NO, YOU DON'T!
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

HA
HA!
ROAR
CRACKLE
HA
HA
HA!
BURN

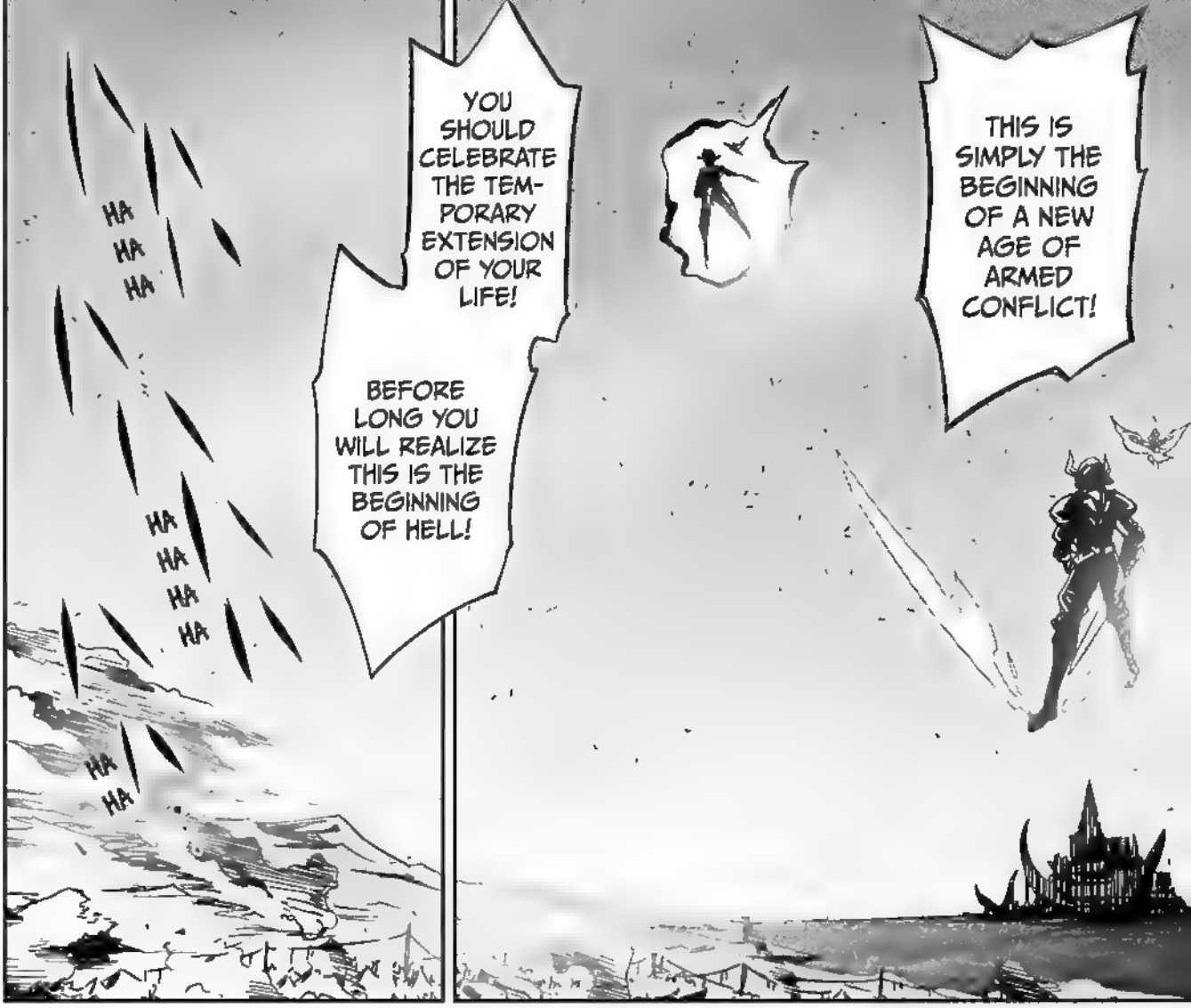
WHOOSH

FWOOSH
MAS-
TER!
IT'S
NEARLY
TIME.
I
KNOW.

HA
HA
HEH
HEH
ROAR


PANT
PANT
PANT
ROAR

RUMBLE
RUSTLE
WITH-DRAW OUR FORCES!
RE-TREAT!
YOU ESCAPED WITH YOUR LIFE.
I PRO-TECTED THE DEMON QUEEN.
I WON.


HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
YOU SHOULD CELEBRATE THE TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF YOUR LIFE!
BEFORE LONG YOU WILL REALIZE THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF HELL!
THIS IS SIMPLY THE BEGINNING OF A NEW AGE OF ARMED CONFLICT!

HOW IS THE DEMON QUEEN?
SHE'LL LIVE.
SHE'LL HAVE TO REST FOR TWO WEEKS.
EVEN AFTER THAT, SHE'LL NEED HELP MOVING AROUND FOR A FEW MONTHS.

KURULTAI GROUNDS
DEMON QUEEN'S CASTLE
HIDDEN SOLDIERS
THE SEAL KING
BLUE DEMON TERRITORY
THE BLUE DEMON CLAN HAD A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS HIDDEN NEARBY.
THEY WILL GROUP UP AND RETURN TO THEIR OWN TERRITORY.
WHAT ABOUT THE BLUE DEMONS?
THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO SETTLE THE SCORE.
BE-TRAYAL ...
...IS BAD.
IT IS CLEAR THE BLUE DEMONS HAVE BETRAYED THE CONFERENCE.
DURING THE KURULTAI...
...I GOT THE IMPRESSION THE BLUE DEMONS MOVED ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN PLANS AND SCHEMES.
THE DEMON QUEEN IS CURRENTLY BED RIDDEN.
I BELIEVE WE SHOULD WAIT TO MAKE A DECISION.

IF THAT'S TRUE, THEIR RETREAT ...
...MAY HAVE SOME MOTIVE BEHIND IT AS WELL.
IT WOULD BE DANGER-OUS TO PURSUE THEM CARE-LESSLY.
WE MUST INVESTI-GATE THE ASSASSIN AS WELL.

THE FANGED DEMONS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!
IT IS CLEAR THE FANGED DEMONS' SNAKE CLAN PARTICIPATED IN THIS BE-TRAYAL.
YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE YOU NOW?
BEEP
BEEP

THE FANGED DEMONS ARE NOT FREE OF GUILT.
WE ARE NOT TRAITORS!
YOU MUST BELIEVE ME!
!
WAIT A MINUTE...

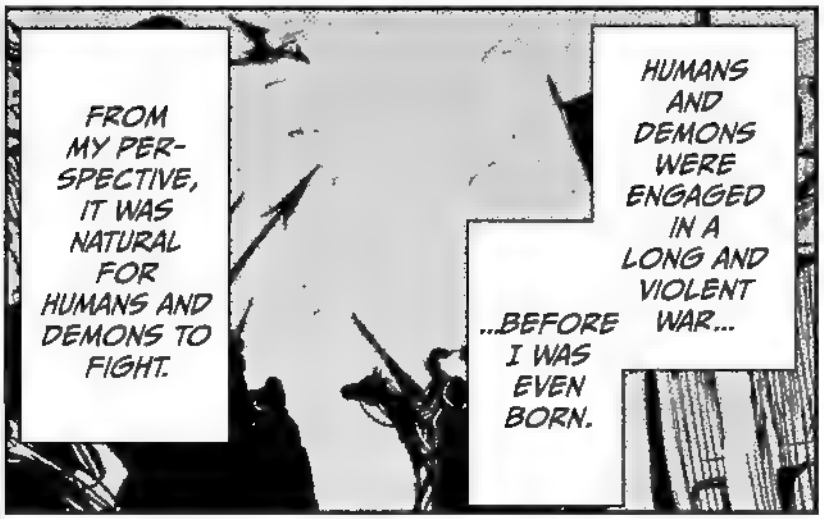
IT HAPPENED A WHILE AGO.
WE CONFISCATED DOCUMENTS ATTEMPTING TO INCITE AN INVASION OF THE SURFACE WORLD.
IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARD, THE BLUE DEMON ARMY PASSED THROUGH THE GATE AND INVADED THE SURFACE WORLD.
I MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE ASSASSIN.
MURMUR
WHAT?
FOR SOME REASON ...
...HE WAS BREATHING STRANGELY.
HE HISSED ...
... LIKE A SNAKE.
UMM ...
THE MERCHANT WAS MEETING WITH A MEMBER OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN.
DURING OUR INVESTIGATION, WE HEARD OF...
..."A MAN WHO HISSES LIKE A SNAKE"...
...BUT ULTIMATELY WE FAILED TO CATCH HIM.

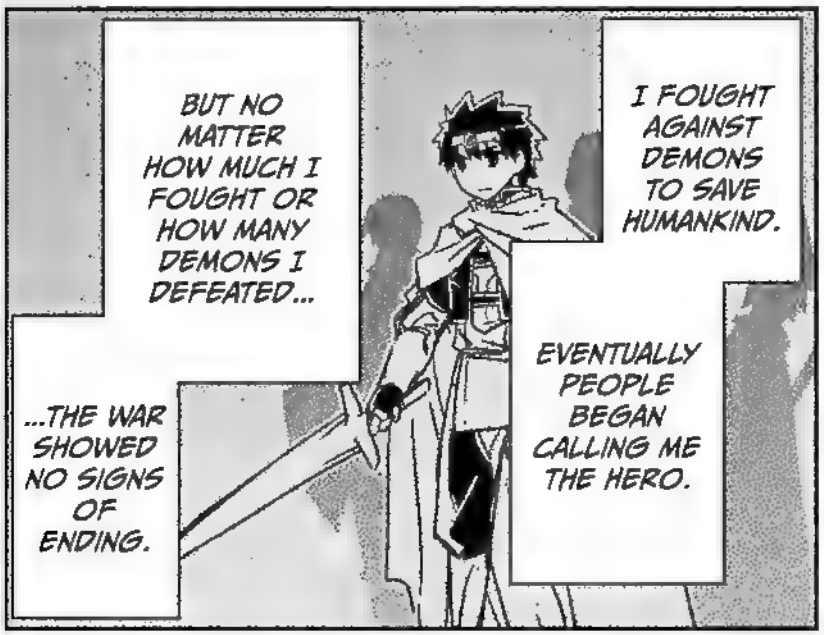
...IT'S POSSIBLE THE ASSASSIN HAD TIES TO HUMANS AS WELL?
IN OTHER WORDS ...
!
AT THE TIME, WE BELIEVED THE MAN WAS HUMAN.
HE ENTERED GATEWAY CITY AS A HUMAN MERCHANT.
NO.
THERE'S NO POINT IN HIDING ANYTHING NOW.
HE HAD TIES WITH HUMANS?
THIS WILL ONLY MAKE DEMON SUSPECTS HUMANS EVEN MORE.
I SEE.
YEAH.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
WE'RE STILL ONLY NEWCOMERS.
WE'LL SEE BETTER RESULTS BY BEING HONEST AND ASKING FOR YOUR WISDOM.

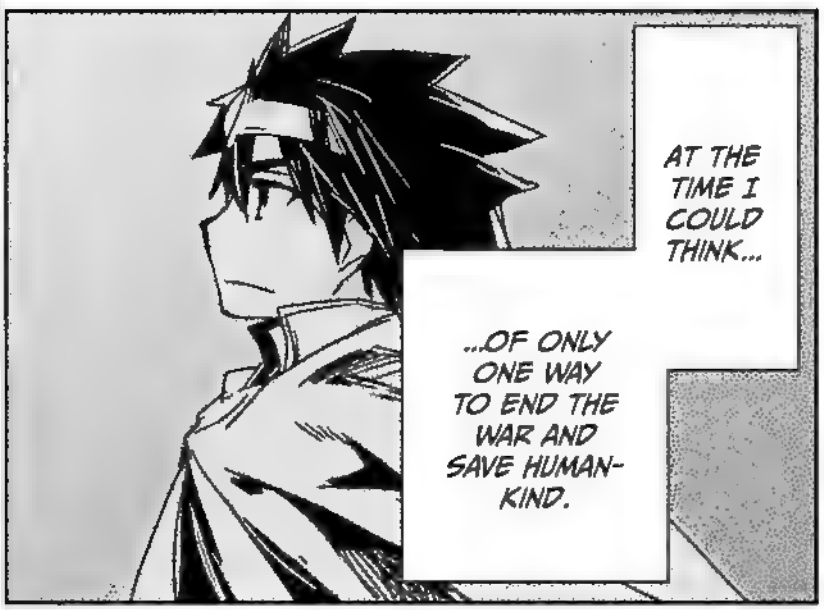
I WAS ONCE KNOWN AS THE HERO.
MURMUR
HEY.
BLACK KNIGHT?
THE BLACK KNIGHT IS A HUMAN?
HUMAN.
THAT AP-PEAR-ANCE...
!

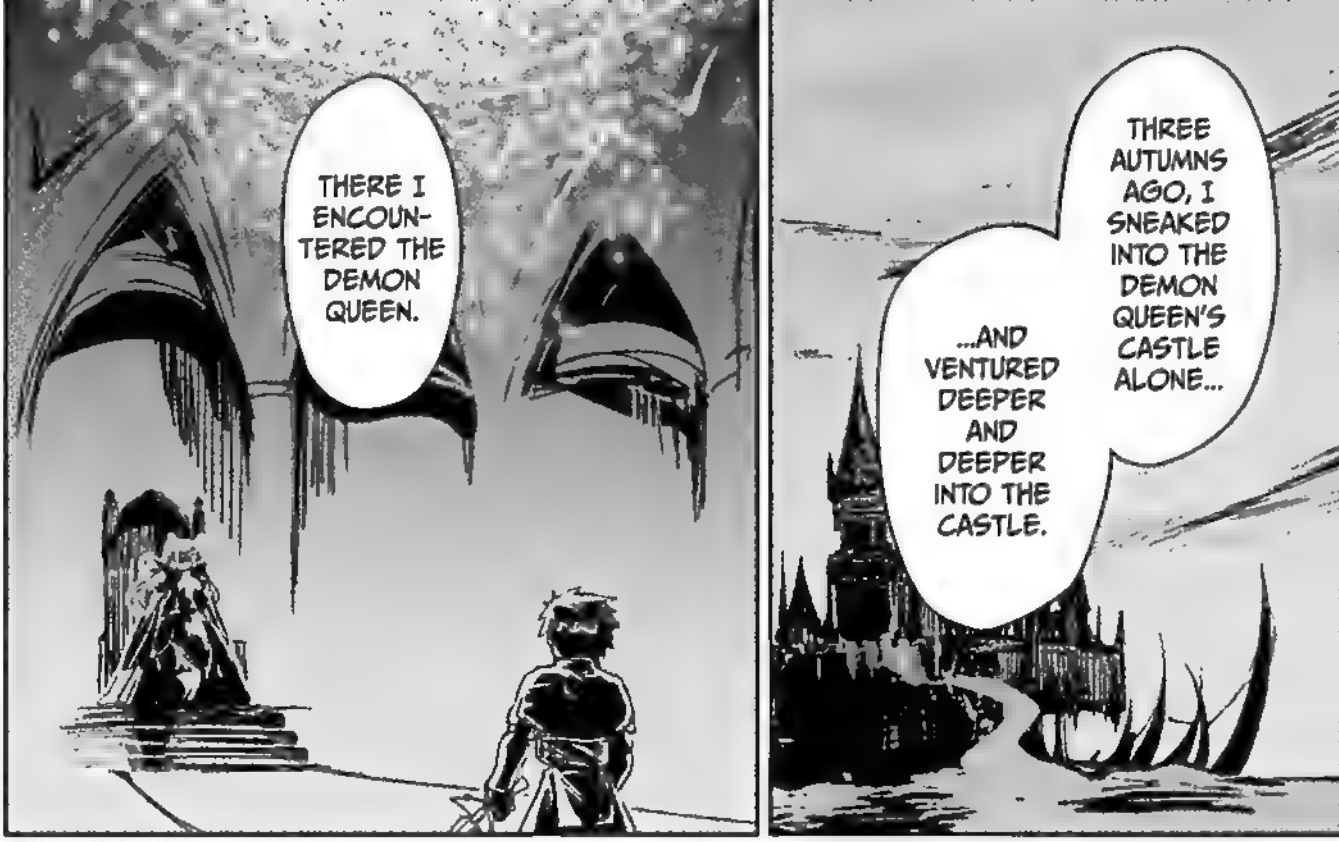
HA
THAT STRENGTH!
THAT MAGIC!
I KNEW IT!
HA
HA
HA
THE ARCH-ENEMY OF DEMONS!
THE STRONGEST HUMAN!
WHAT?
THE HERO?
THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M SORRY.
CHUG
CHUG
WHOOSH
THE WARRIOR OF 10,000 SKILLS AND 1,000 SWORDS?
THE HERO WHO KILLED A THOUSAND OF OUR CLAN'S MEMBERS ALONE?
ゴォ
RUMBLE
WHY DOES THE HERO WEAR BLACK ARMOR?
IT'S NATURAL FOR MANY DEMONS TO RESENT ME.
I KILLED THEM.
IT WAS WAR.
I WON'T MAKE EXCUSES.

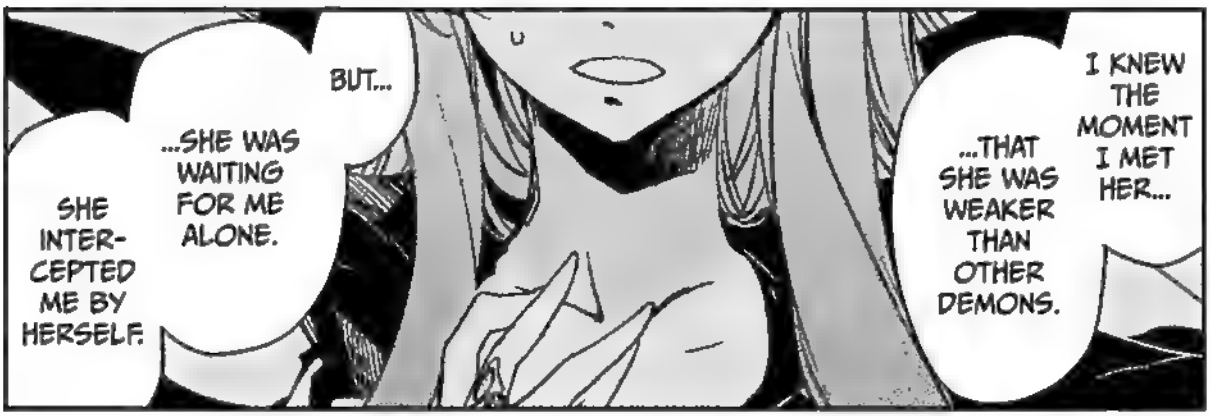
KILLING ...
...THE DEMON QUEEN.


HUMANS AND DEMONS WERE ENGAGED IN A LONG AND VIOLENT WAR...
...BEFORE I WAS EVEN BORN.
FROM MY PERSPECTIVE, IT WAS NATURAL FOR HUMANS AND DEMONS TO FIGHT.


I FOUGHT AGAINST DEMONS TO SAVE HUMANKIND.
EVENTUALLY PEOPLE BEGAN CALLING ME THE HERO.
BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH I FOUGHT OR HOW MANY DEMONS I DEFEATED...
...THE WAR SHOWED NO SIGNS OF ENDING.


AT THE TIME I COULD THINK...
...OF ONLY ONE WAY TO END THE WAR AND SAVE HUMANKIND.


THERE I ENCOUNTERED THE DEMON QUEEN.
THREE AUTUMNS AGO, I SNEAKED INTO THE DEMON QUEEN'S CASTLE ALONE...
...AND VENTURED DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE CASTLE.


BUT...
...SHE WAS WAITING FOR ME ALONE.
SHE INTERCEPTED ME BY HERSELF.
I KNEW THE MOMENT I MET HER...
...THAT SHE WAS WEAKER THAN OTHER DEMONS.

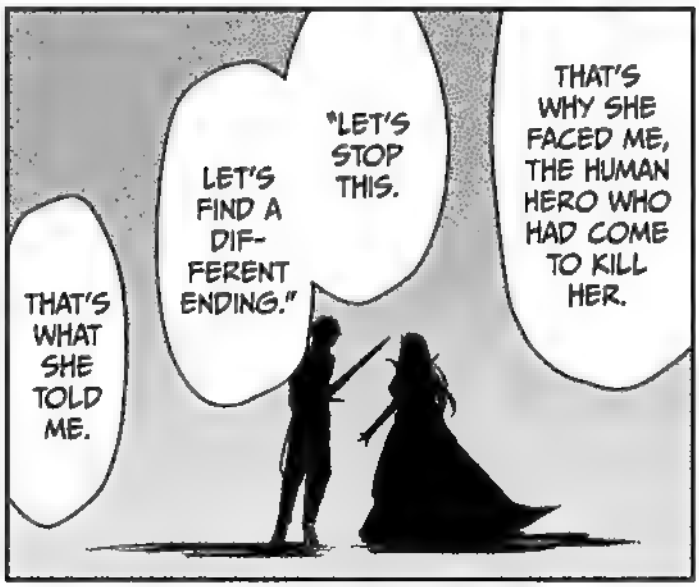
NOW I THINK I UNDERSTAND...
...WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED TO THE SPIRIT AND HUMAN WORLD...
...IF SHE HAD DIED THEN.
SHE EXHAUSTED HER WORDS TO CONVEY HER CONVICTIONS ...
...AND PUT HERSELF ON THE LINE.
DESPERATELY ...
...SHE TRIED TO AVOID CROSSING SWORDS.

ACCORDING TO HER...
...THE TWO WORLDS ARE DEPENDENT ON ONE ANOTHER.
THEY HATE EACH OTHER AND FIGHT...
...BUT THEY CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT THE OTHER.
THE HUMAN WORLD SUFFERS FROM PLAGUE AND HUNGER.
PEOPLE STARVE TO DEATH FROM LACK OF FOOD.
THOUGH IT SOUNDS UNPLEASANT, IN ORDER TO HIDE THAT...
...HUMANS STARTED THE WAR AGAINST HUMANS.
MEANWHILE, THE SPIRIT WORLD WAS A BLOODBATH OF CONFLICT.
TO UNITE THE DEMON CLANS WHO REFUSED TO STOP FIGHTING...
...AND TO FORCE THEM TO LOOK AT THEIR OWN FUTURES...
...A WAR AGAINST HUMANS WAS DEEMED EFFECTIVE.

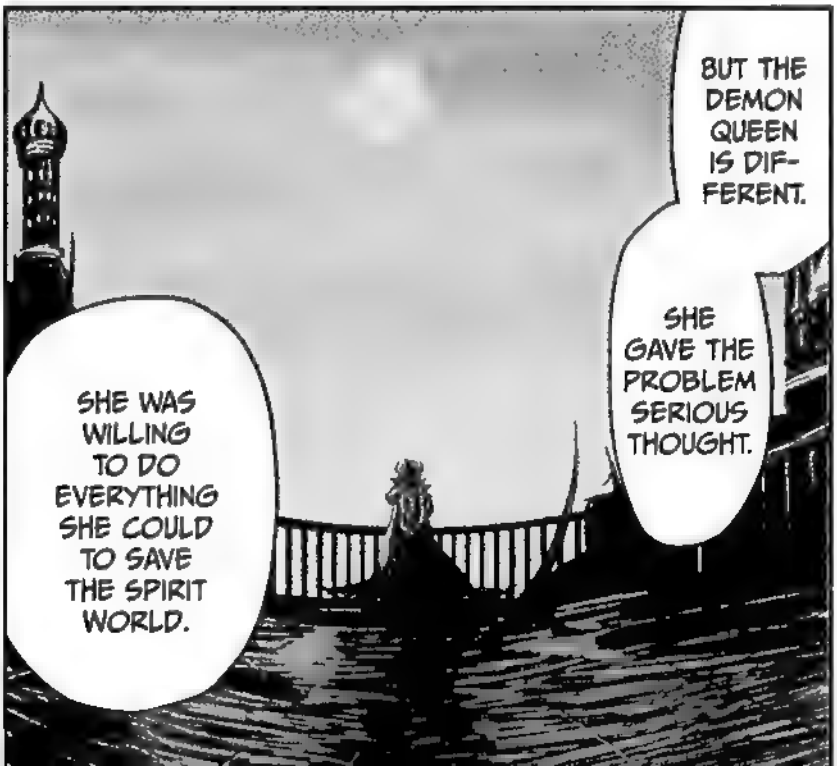
DEMONS AND HUMANS ...
...WEREN'T BORN TO DESTROY ONE ANOTHER.
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE.
THAT'S WHAT SHE WANTED TO BELIEVE.

THE DEMON QUEEN DIDN'T LIKE THAT.

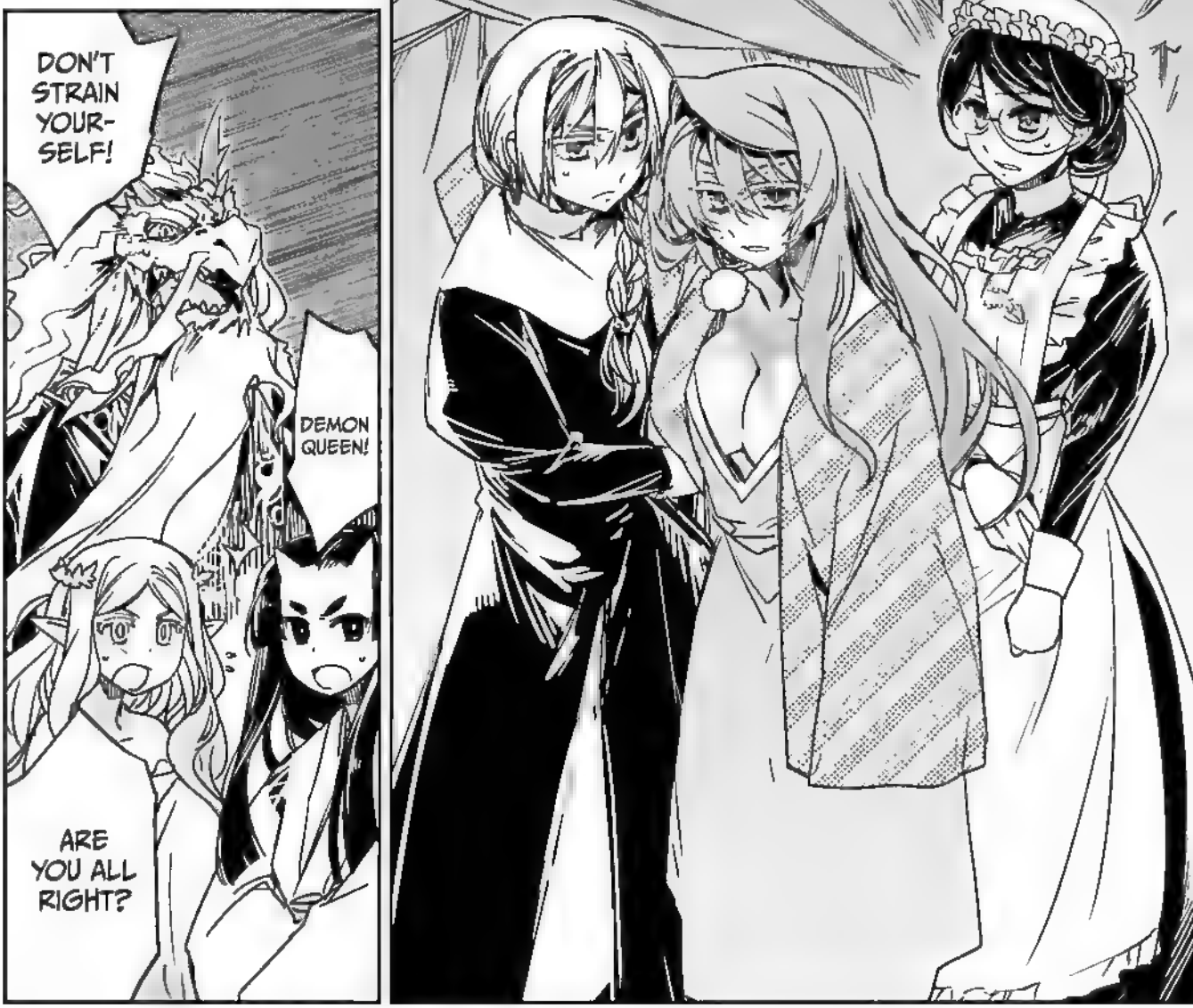
I AM THE HERO, THE SAVIOR OF HUMANKIND.
DESPITE THEIR FLATTERY, I WAS SIMPLY AN ASSASSIN WHO INVADED THE SPIRIT WORLD.

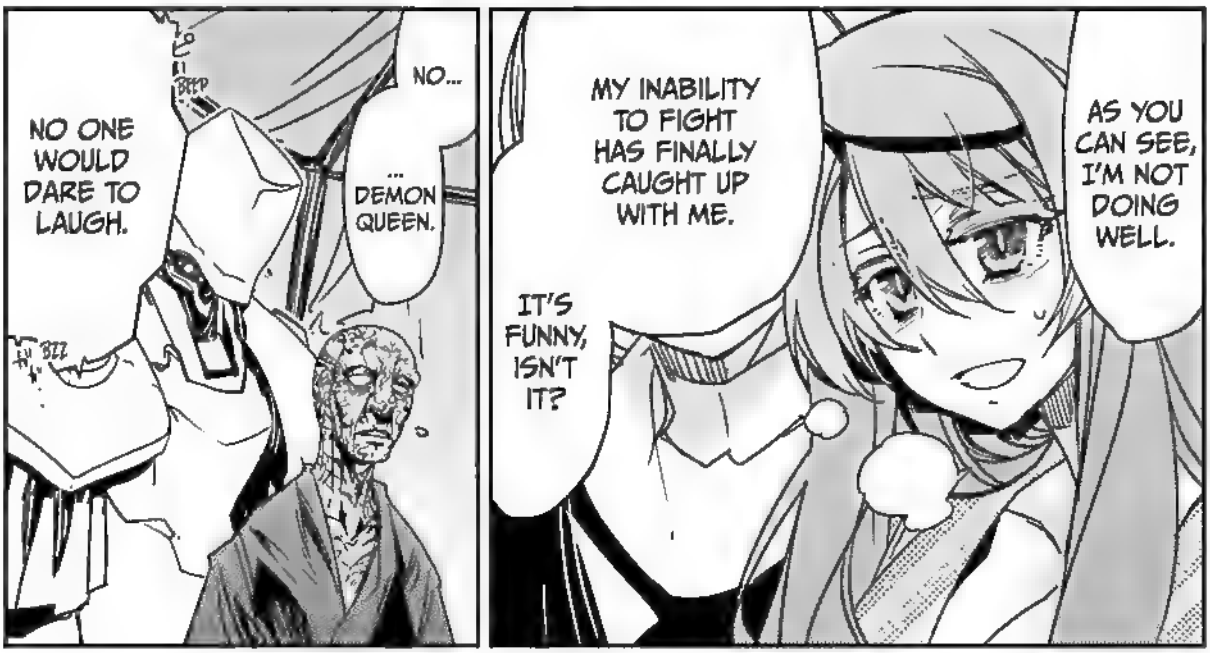

THAT'S WHY SHE FACED ME, THE HUMAN HERO WHO HAD COME TO KILL HER.
"LET'S STOP THIS. LET'S FIND A DIFFERENT ENDING."
THAT'S WHAT SHE TOLD ME.

THE DEMON QUEEN... ...IS THE TRUE HERO.


BUT THE DEMON QUEEN IS DIFFERENT.
SHE GAVE THE PROBLEM SERIOUS THOUGHT.
SHE WAS WILLING TO DO EVERYTHING SHE COULD TO SAVE THE SPIRIT WORLD.

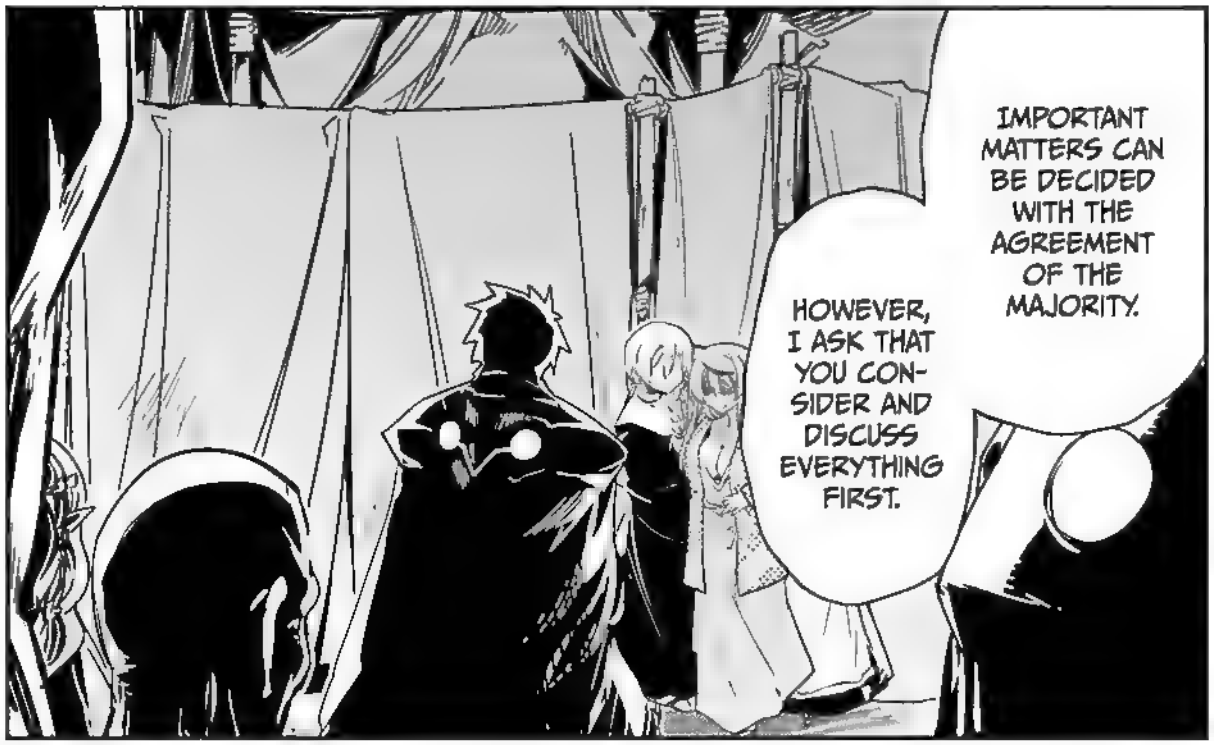
IT WON'T GET US ANY-WHERE.
I THINK THAT'S WHAT SHE WAS TRYING TO SAY.
WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW IS TOO UNNATURAL.
IT'S TWIST-ED.
IT'S NOT AS THOUGH SHE REJECTS WAR OR CONFLICT.
IT'S JUST...
RATH-ER...
...SHE ENVISIONS CONFLICTS THAT LEAD TO THE FUTURE INSTEAD OF MUTUAL DE-STRUCTION.
THE PROS-PERITY AND PEACE SHE ENVISIONS...
...ISN'T A PARADISE WITHOUT CONFLICT.
HEY.
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO DO THIS WHILE I WAS GONE?
RUSTLE


DON'T STRAIN YOUR-SELF!
DEMON QUEEN!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?


AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M NOT DOING WELL.
MY INABILITY TO FIGHT HAS FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH ME.
IT'S FUNNY, ISN'T IT?
NO...
... DEMON QUEEN.
NO ONE WOULD DARE TO LAUGH.

I TEMPORARILY ENTRUST THIS CONFERENCE WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE DEMON QUEEN.
I DON'T HAVE MUCH STRENGTH. I'LL MAKE THIS QUICK.
THIS IS A GOOD OP-PORTU-NITY.
?!

...COULD ABSORB ALL THE OPINIONS, DIFFERENCES, AND IMBALANCES BETWEEN THE CLANS...
THE IDEA A SINGLE ABSOLUTE POWER...
...IS INCREDIBLY OUTDATED.
OUR CURRENT GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE...
...IS ONLY MEANT FOR TRANSI-TION PERI-ODS.
I'M NOT SURE A DEMON MONARCH SHOULD BE SAYING THIS
ARCH-DUKE FIRE DRAG-ON.
FAIRY QUEEN.
TAKE CARE OF THE LESSER CLANS AS WELL.
YES, MY QUEEN.
VERY WELL.
I'D LIKE YOU TO BE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFER-ENCE.


IMPORTANT MATTERS CAN BE DECIDED WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE MAJORITY.
HOWEVER, I ASK THAT YOU CONSIDER AND DISCUSS EVERYTHING FIRST.

DEMON QUEEN!
DEMON QUEEN!

I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW MONTHS.
UNTIL THEN...

I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO ME...
...BUT PLEASE DON'T DISHONOR THE MEMBERS OF MY CLAN!
THE SILVER TIGER OF SNOWFLAKE MOUNTAIN SINCERELY REQUESTS YOUR MERCY!
THE FANGED DEMONS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED!
WE HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED ACHIEVING GLORY THROUGH METHODS AS COWARDLY AS ASSASSINATION!
WUMPH

!
I HAVE NEVER DOUBTED YOU OR YOUR CLAN.
DUKE SILVER TIGER, RAISE YOUR HEAD.

IF ANYTHING, I MUST APOLOGIZE TO THE CLAN CHIEFS.

THOUGH I HAD MY REASONS ...
...I DECEIVED THE CHIEFS OF YOUR HONORABLE CLANS...
...AND LIED TO YOU.
I FAKED MY DEATH AND DECEIVED YOU.
THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE I DIDN'T DO...
...WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO EARN YOUR TRUST.
I ALSO ARROGANTLY BELIEVED I COULD HANDLE EVERYTHING MYSELF.
I'M SORRY.

LEAVE THIS TO THE REST OF US.
WE WILL WAIT FOR YOUR RETURN.
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, WE WILL INFORM YOU IMMEDIATELY.

YOU DON'T...
...SEEM SMALL...
...ANY-MORE.
NO.
YOU HAVE PROVEN YOUR WORTH.

UNTIL WE SAVE YOU FROM DEATH THREE TIMES ON THE BATTLEFIELD, OUR DEBT WILL NOT BE ERASED!
MY CLAN AND I OWE YOU A GREAT DEBT!

DEMON QUEEN!

THE FANGED DEMON CLAN WILL SERVE THE DEMON QUEEN...
...AND BE THE SHIELD THAT PROTECTS YOU AT ALL TIMES.

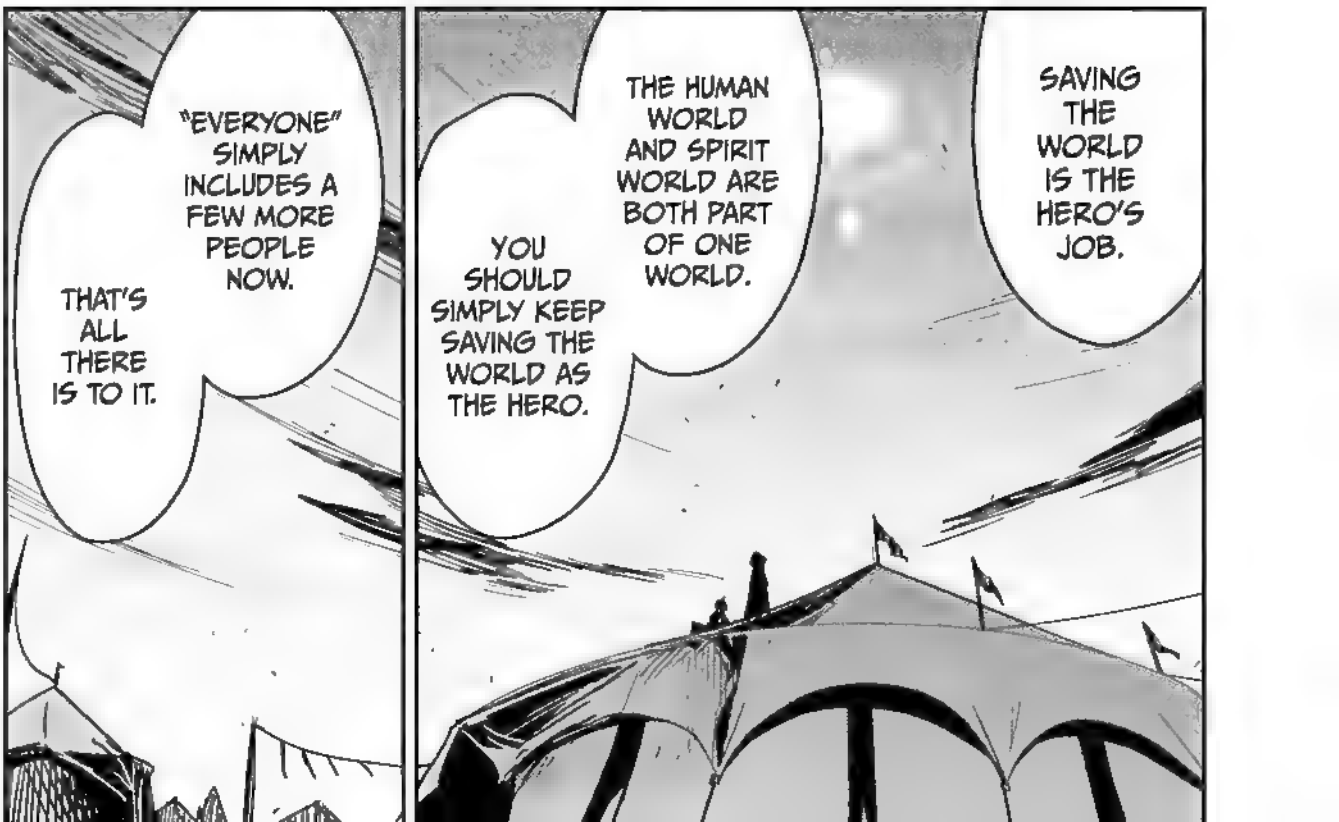
YOU IDIOT!
YOU PUSHED YOURSELF TOO HARD!
DEMON QUEEN!
WHO ARE YOU CALLING AN IDIOT?
I AM GRATEFUL...
...TO YOU.
STAGGER
WE HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH A MAJOR TASK.
A KURULTAI WITHOUT THE DEMON QUEEN.
I WONDER IF THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED...
...IN THE SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS OF OUR HISTORY.
BUT A DEMON MONARCH AND HERO WORKING TOGETHER...

HA HA HA HA HA
THERE ARE EVEN MORE THINGS I WANT TO SEE NOW.
SO THAT'S THE SITUA-TION?
YOU WERE LISTEN-ING.
WHOOSH

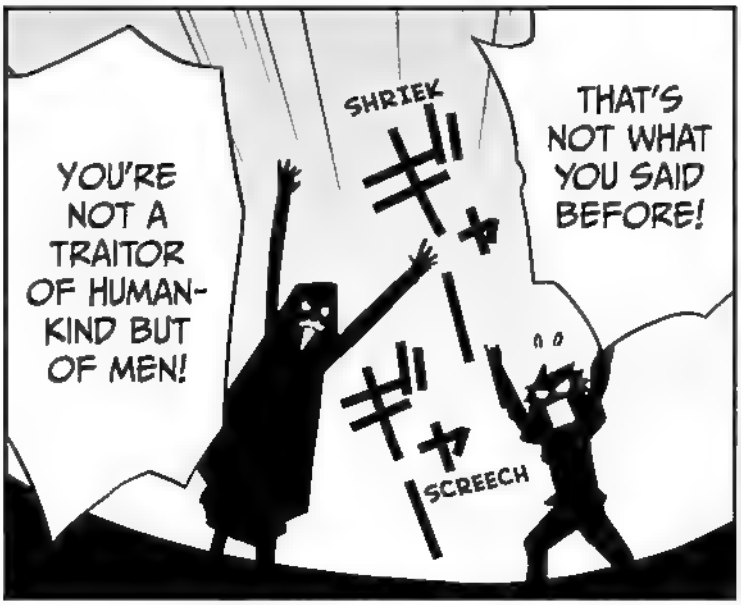
UGH.
WHAT'S WRONG?
DOESN'T THIS MAKE ME...
...A TRAITOR OF HUMANKIND?
I SUPPOSE IT DOES.
YOUR HEAD EASILY CARRIES THE HIGHEST BOUNTY IN THE ENTIRE CONTINENT.
THE DEMONS CONSIDER ME AN OUTSIDER TOO.
THEY SEEM TO BE ALLOWING IT SINCE I'M THE BLACK KNIGHT DIRECTLY SERVING THE DEMON QUEEN.
THE HERO IS THE DEMONS' ARCH-ENEMY.
THE DEMON QUEEN MAY ALSO BE IN DANGER FOR WORKING WITH YOU.
....
GROAN あー
MOAN

NO.
I DID IT BECAUSE...
...I WANTED TO SAVE EVERYONE AND THE WORLD.
WERE YOU PLAYING THE HERO SO PEOPLE WOULD LIKE YOU?
WERE YOU FIGHTING FOR EVERYONE'S ACCEPTANCE?

...AND KEEP DOING WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
THEN...
...YOU SHOULD REMAIN THE HERO...


"EVERYONE" SIMPLY INCLUDES A FEW MORE PEOPLE NOW.
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
YOU SHOULD SIMPLY KEEP SAVING THE WORLD AS THE HERO.
THE HUMAN WORLD AND SPIRIT WORLD ARE BOTH PART OF ONE WORLD.
SAVING THE WORLD IS THE HERO'S JOB.

OLD MAN.
BESIDES, THERE ARE GOOD THINGS TOO.
?
HAVE YOU FONDLED THEM?
WHAT?
HAVE YOU TOUCHED THAT MASSIVE BOUNCY MASS?
THOSE DELIGHTFUL AND BE-WITCHING GYRATING ELLIPSES?
THOSE WILLFUL BREASTS THAT JUMP ABOUT LIKE LITTLE DEMONS?
NO.
I HAVEN'T HAD THE OPPOR-TUNITY.
AHA HA HA HA
YOU'RE QUITE THE COW-ARDLY HERO!
FUME
I'VE...
I'VE BEEN BE-TWEEN THEM...
WHAT ?!


YOU'RE NOT A TRAITOR OF HUMAN-KIND BUT OF MEN!
SHRIEK
SCREECH
THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE!

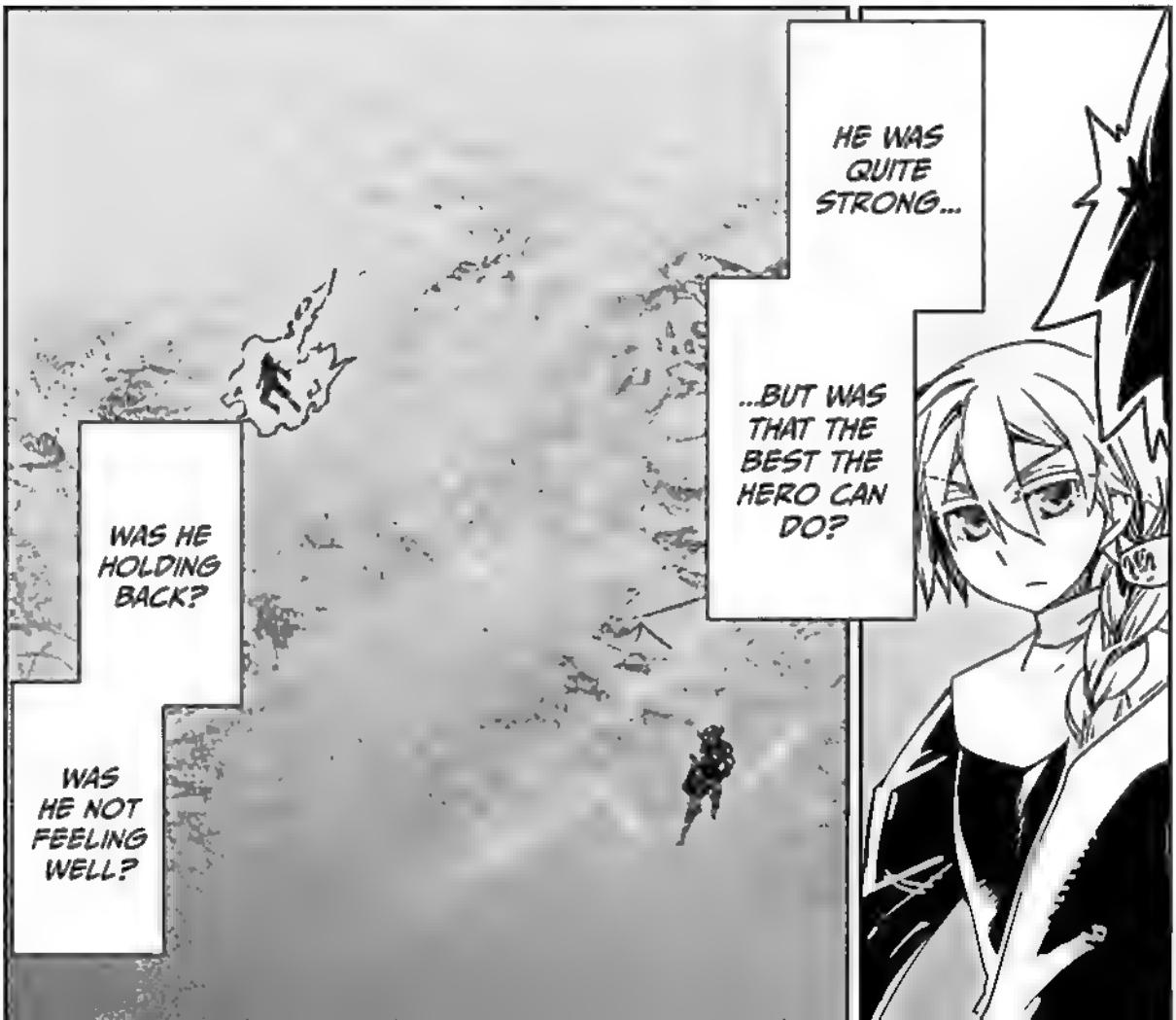
WHAT ?!
YOU'RE DEFINITELY A TRAITOR.

?
SCREECH
SHRIEK

I COULDN'T HELP THE SITUATION.
COUGH
COUGH
YOU KEEP PUSHING YOURSELF TOO HARD.
YOU NEED TO REST.

URGH
POW
THE SAME GOES FOR YOU, HERO!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU SHOULD REFLECT ON YOUR ACTIONS, DEMON QUEEN.
ARGHHH
YOU ONLY DIDN'T DIE BECAUSE YOU'RE THE HERO.
YOU'RE AS SERIOUSLY INJURED AS THE DEMON QUEEN.
IT LOOKS LIKE HE HIT ME WITH DAMAGE AND A CURSE.
MY HEALING ABILITY AND IMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN THROWN OUT OF WHACK TOO.
IT'S NOT HEALING WELL.
HE GOT ME WITH A HIGH-DENSITY ATTACK SPELL.
GLOW

YEAH.
PRETTY STRONG.
WAS HE...
...STRONG?

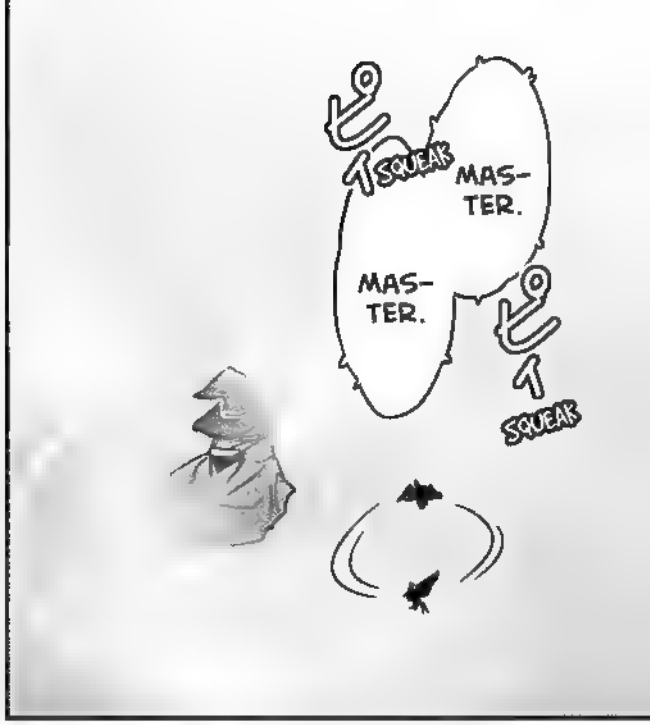

HE WAS QUITE STRONG...
...BUT WAS THAT THE BEST THE HERO CAN DO?
WAS HE HOLDING BACK?
WAS HE NOT FEELING WELL?

I'M SORRY.
YOU EVEN STOPPED THE HEALING SPELL...
...SO YOU COULD FAKE YOUR OWN DEATH!
ANYWAY, DEMON QUEEN...
...YOU CERTAINLY PUSHED YOURSELF TOO HARD THIS TIME.
I AM GRATE-FUL.
I WOULD'VE DIED WITHOUT YOU.
I KNOW.
I WAS SHOCKED WHEN THE HERO BROUGHT ME TO YOU USING HIS DISPLACE-MENT SPELL.
OH.
THANK YOU.
I'LL STAY AT THE CASTLE FOR A WHILE...
YOU'RE NOT OUT OF THE WOODS YET.
...SO I CAN TREAT BOTH OF YOU.

THIS IS A PRE-DICA-MENT, THOUGH.
WHAT'S WRONG ?
NOW I CAN'T TOUSLE YOUR HAIR.
SLUMP
YOU'RE RIGHT.
WELL, IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
I CAN STILL DO IT!
TOUSLE もふ
TOUSLE もふ
WHAT ?!
MY, MY.
I CAN DO THAT, AS WELL.
なでなで RUB
RUB
HEY!

A LITTLE AGITATION...
THIS IS PART OF THE HEALING PROCESS.
...WILL HELP YOU RECOVER SOONER.
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT!
LOOK. YOU'RE ALREADY FEELING BETTER.
NOT ENOUGH.
STILL NOT ENOUGH.

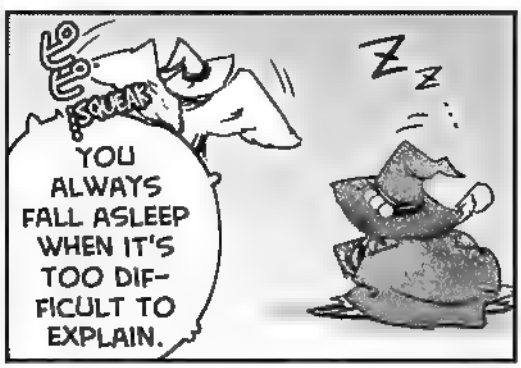
SQUEAK
YOU WILL COLLAPSE IF YOU DON'T STOP.
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH.

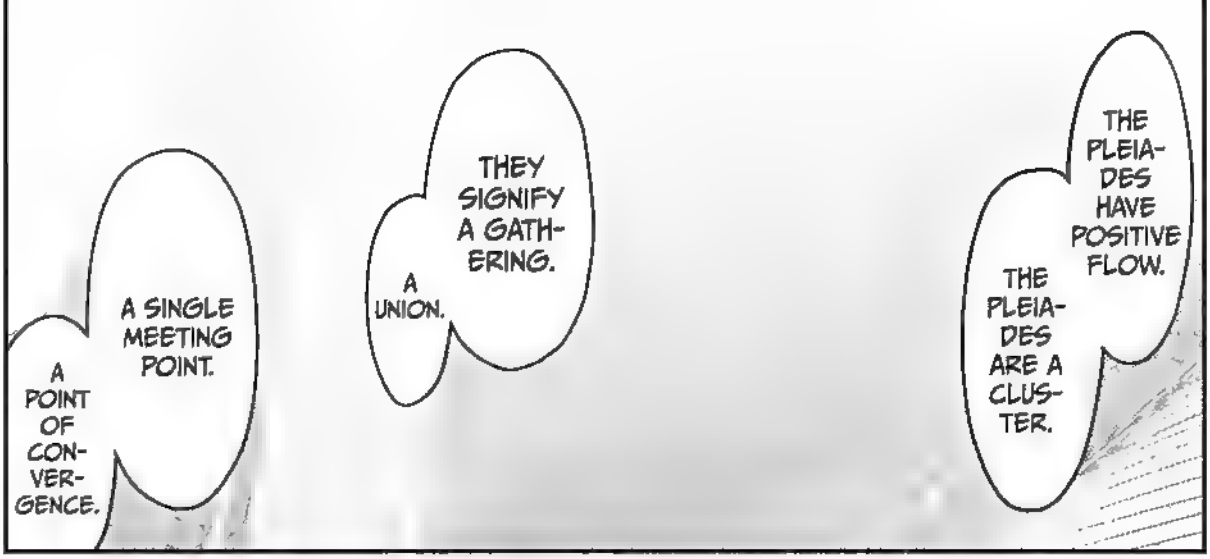

SQUEAK
MAS-TER.
MAS-TER.
SQUEAK

SQUEAK
MASTER, NO ONE IS STRONGER THAN YOU.
WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO HOARD SO MUCH MAGIC?
SQUEAK

SQUEAK
NO!
SHUT UP.
SQUEAK
DON'T JUST FRY ME!
AT LEAST MARINATE ME FIRST!
SQUEAK

SQUEAK


SQUEAK
YOU ALWAYS FALL ASLEEP WHEN IT'S TOO DIF-FICULT TO EXPLAIN.
Z z


THE PLEIADES HAVE POSITIVE FLOW.
THE PLEIADES ARE A CLUSTER.
THEY SIGNIFY A GATHERING.
A UNION.
A SINGLE MEETING POINT.
A POINT OF CONVERGENCE.

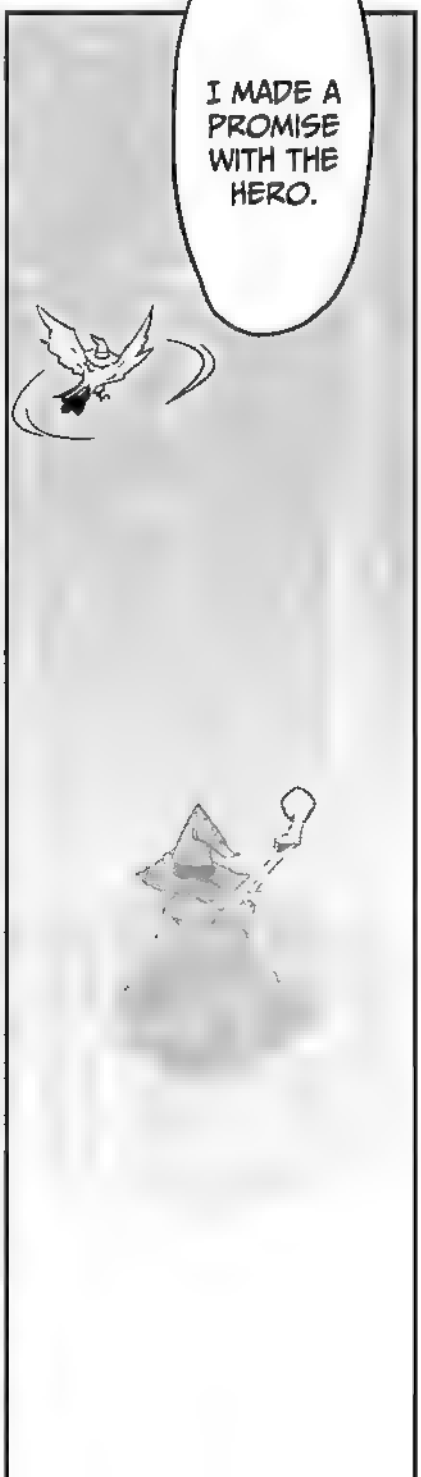
"GOOD QUESTIONS ARE BETTER THAN GOOD ANSWERS."
WE MUST QUESTION THIS.
GLOW

EVERYTHING MUST CONVERGE AT A SINGLE POINT...
...SO WHY ARE THERE TWO?
?
?
SQUEAK
SQUEAK

I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU...
...COUGH UP BLOOD AGAIN!
SQUEAK
SQUEAK
SQUEAK

YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF AGAIN IF YOU DON'T STOP TRAINING!
SQUEAK
SQUEAK

NOT ENOUGH.
STILL NOT ENOUGH.
RUMBLE



THE END

Chapter 30
The Demon Queen is the True Hero

CHANGES IN POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Absolutely monarchies in which kings held all the power were a temporary political system established during the transition between feudal societies and democratic societies. They were destined to crumble eventually.

...COULD ABSORB ALL THE OPINIONS, DIFFERENCES, AND IMBALANCES BETWEEN THE CLANS...
THE IDEA A SINGLE ABSOLUTE POWER...
...IS INCREDIBLY OUTDATED.

Absolute monarchy under which the king has great power are a temporary political system born before the establishment of democratic systems.

THE FORMATION OF ABSOLUTE MONARCHIES AND THE TRANSITION TO CIVIL SOCIETIES

Emperors and kings are generally considered incredibly powerful rulers who reign over a nation. Such systems are known as "absolute monarchies" or "absolutism," and examples of these can bee seen from the 16th to 17th Centuries. However, with the adoption of "feudalism" during the Middle Ages, the relationship between rulers and the nobility and knights serving as landowners was reciprocal, and rulers were not that strong. Later serfs became wealthier through the establishment of a currency economy, and because of the shift towards customary tenants and the decline of the farming population due to pests, the manor economy supporting feudal systems collapsed. Feudal lords and knights who could no longer support themselves fell and became subjects of the king, and the political system shifted from feudalism to an absolute monarchy.

Under absolute monarchies, the power of feudal lords, nobles, and the church concentrated under the ruler, strengthening the influence of the king. The basis of the king's power was explained as the divine right of kings in which the king received his power from God and the people could not oppose him or through social contracts in which the people submitted to the king in order to receive his protection.

However, the king could not do as he pleased. Ruling a nation required the cooperation of nobles and commercial and industrial guilds.

Absolute monarchies were born in this manner and only lasted for 200 years. Compared to feudalism, which lasted for over a thousand years, it was a very short amount of time. This was because the common people that overtook feudal lords and nobles as the privileged class expanded so rapidly.

The common people established a foothold for participating in the government during the beginning of the 1300s in France's Estates General. With industrial development and the beginning of the Age of Exploration, the voice of the common people including primarily wealthy merchants grew. Furthermore, as the philosophy of Enlightenment that emphasized reason spread throughout Europe during the 17th Century, arguments against the king's power became popular and the revolutionary idea of overthrowing the king was born.

IMPORTANT MATTERS CAN BE DECIDED WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE MAJORITY.
HOWEVER, I ASK THAT YOU CONSIDER AND DISCUSS EVERYTHING FIRST

The Demon Queen grants the conference her power, making its participants responsible for their thoughts and the decisions of the conference.

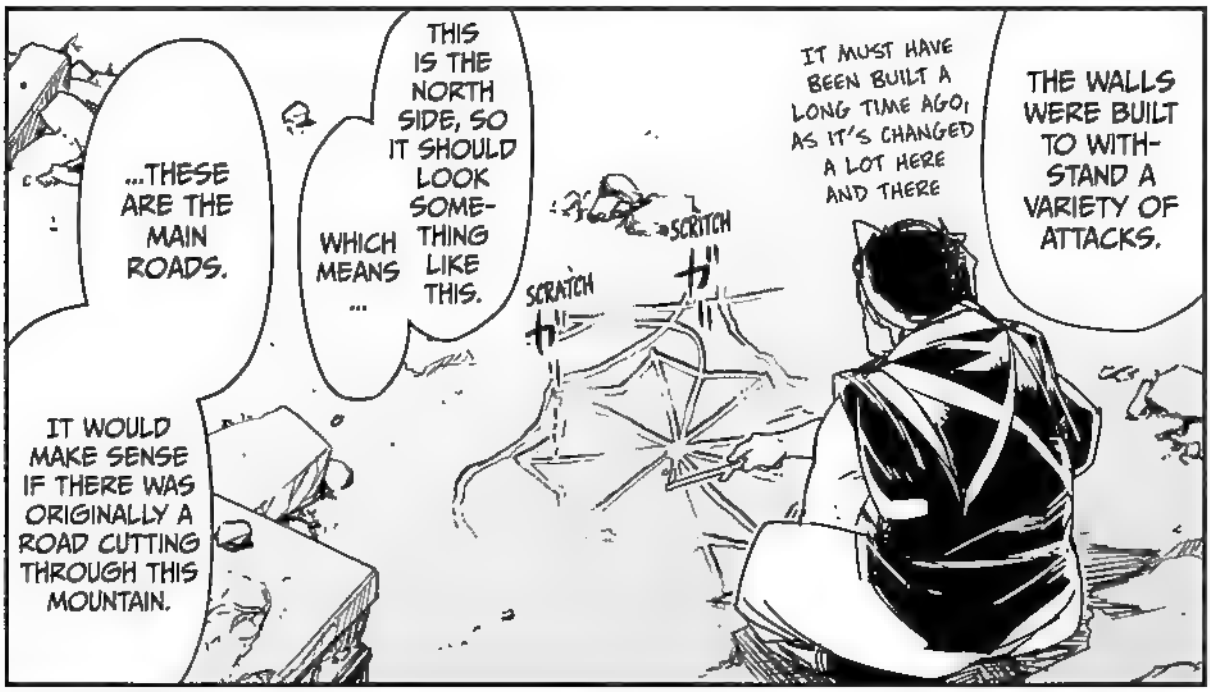
As a result, in the middle of the 17th Century, England shifted to a "constitutional monarchy" due to the Puritan Revolution and the Glorious Revolution that followed. The French Revolution of the late 18th Century caused France to shift to a republic, and the common people became the principal players in government.

THE ROAD TO TOMORROW

THAT'S NOT THE PROB-LEM.
YOU CONVINCED THE DRAGON CLAN TO HELP YOU SECURE TRADE ROUTES IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.
DIDN'T THINGS TURN OUT WELL?
YOU SEEM TIRED FOR ONCE.
YES. I SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM THINGS I DON'T USUALLY DO.
THE GREATEST AMONG THEM IS THE HOLE CONNECTING THE SURFACE AND SUB-TERRANEAN WORLD.
THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AN OLD HIGHWAY FROM GATEWAY CITY TO THE REMAINS OF THE GATE, BUT WE CAN'T USE IT ANYMORE.
THE WALLS SURROUNDING GATEWAY CITY HAVE SUFFERED MUCH DAMAGE. I HAVE SOME CONCERNS RE-GARDING THEIR DEFENSE.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
OH, RIGHT.
...THE PROBLEM IS WE HAVE NO ONE TO TAKE ON THIS MASSIVE UNDERTAKING.
I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE MONEY YOU NEED.
BUT...
IT MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT TO MAKE THIS PLACE A TRADING POST WITH THE SURFACE.

MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
CHAPTER 31
GATEWAY CITY LAUREL TEMPLE
A REQUIEM FOR A RUINED TEMPLE, HUH?

WHOEVER DESIGNED THIS CITY MUST HAVE BEEN PRETTY RESOURCEFUL.
THE CITY IS SURROUNDED BY TWO RIVERS AND NINE HILLS...
...AND THIS TEMPLE STANDS ON THE TOP OF ONE OF THOSE HILLS.
ANY-WAY...
...THIS TEMPLE IS AN IM-PRESSIVE STRUC-TURE.


...THESE ARE THE MAIN ROADS.
IT WOULD MAKE SENSE IF THERE WAS ORIGINALLY A ROAD CUTTING THROUGH THIS MOUNTAIN.
WHICH MEANS ...
THIS IS THE NORTH SIDE, SO IT SHOULD LOOK SOME-THING LIKE THIS.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
IT MUST HAVE BEEN BUILT A LONG TIME AGO, AS IT'S CHANGED A LOT HERE AND THERE
THE WALLS WERE BUILT TO WITH-STAND A VARIETY OF ATTACKS.

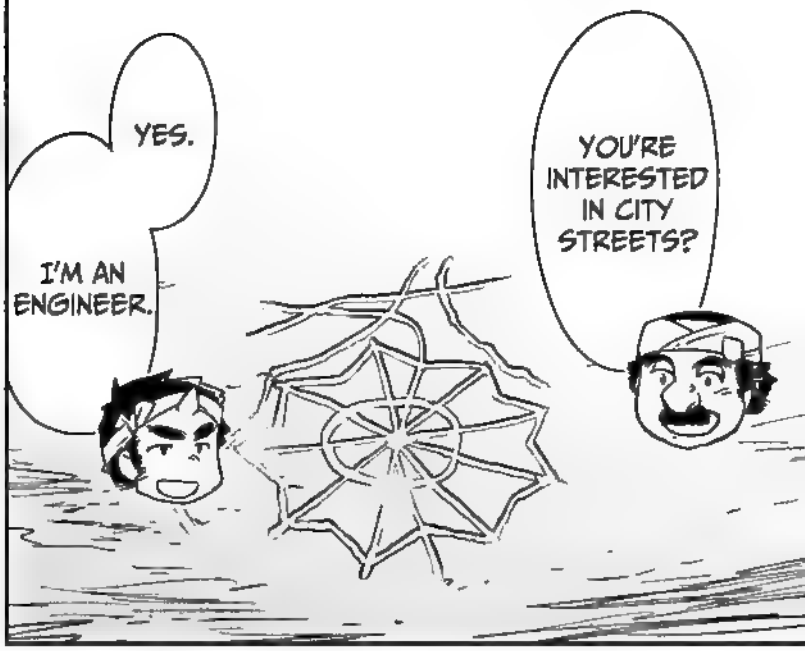
THERE IS ONE.
BUT THE MAIN ROADS ...
DOES THAT MAKE THE SOUTH GATE THE ORIGINAL MAIN ENTRANCE OF THE CITY?
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
NO, IT NEEDS A ROAD STRETCHING SOUTH.
OTHERWISE IT WOULDN'T MAKE SENSE.

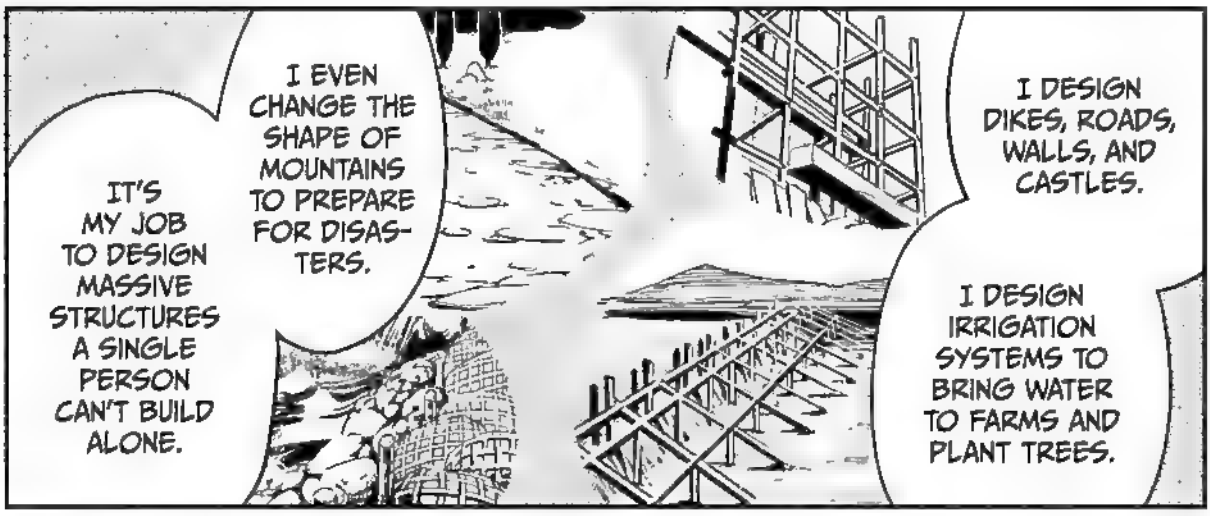
CHAPTER 31 Archenemy and Hero

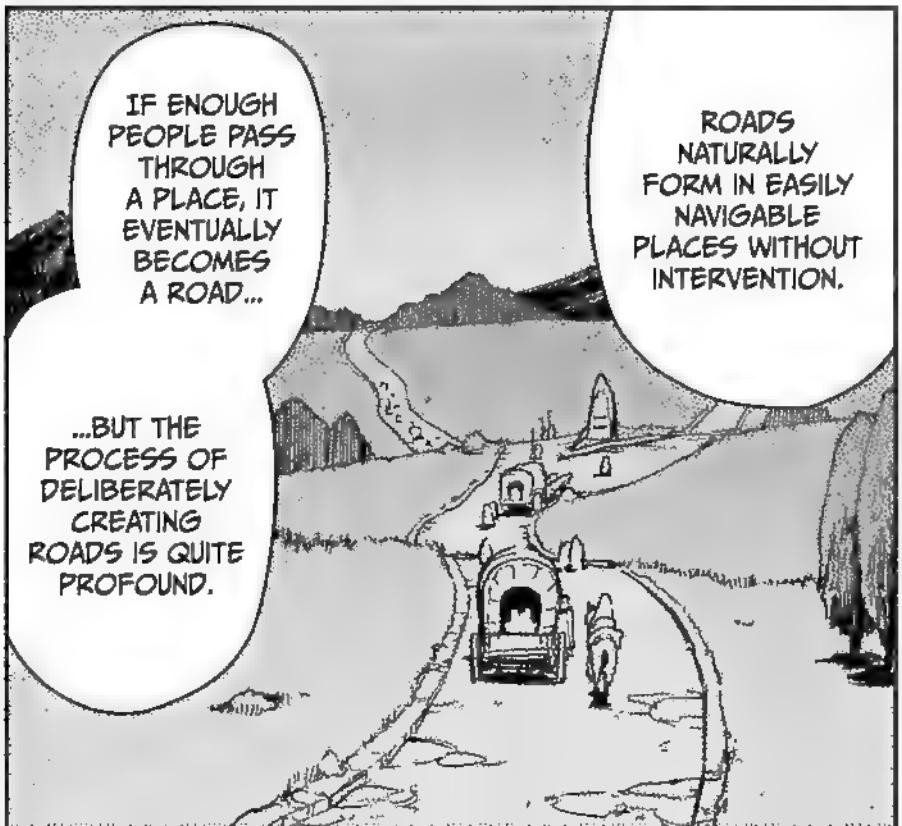
We are the Crimson Disciples

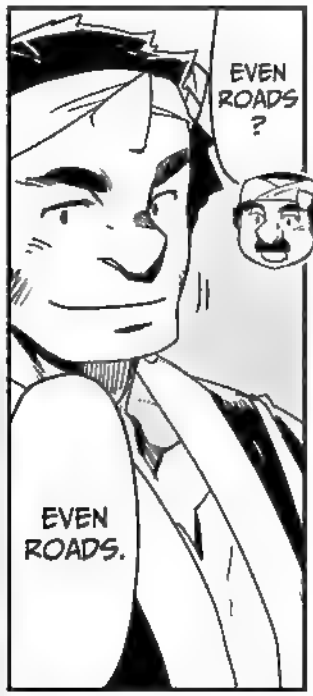
I JUST CAME TO THIS CITY.
I FINISHED THE BUSINESS I CAME FOR, SO I'M HAVING A LOOK AROUND.
YOU'RE A TRAVELING MERCHANT? IS THAT WHY YOU'RE SO FAMILIAR WITH THE ROADS?

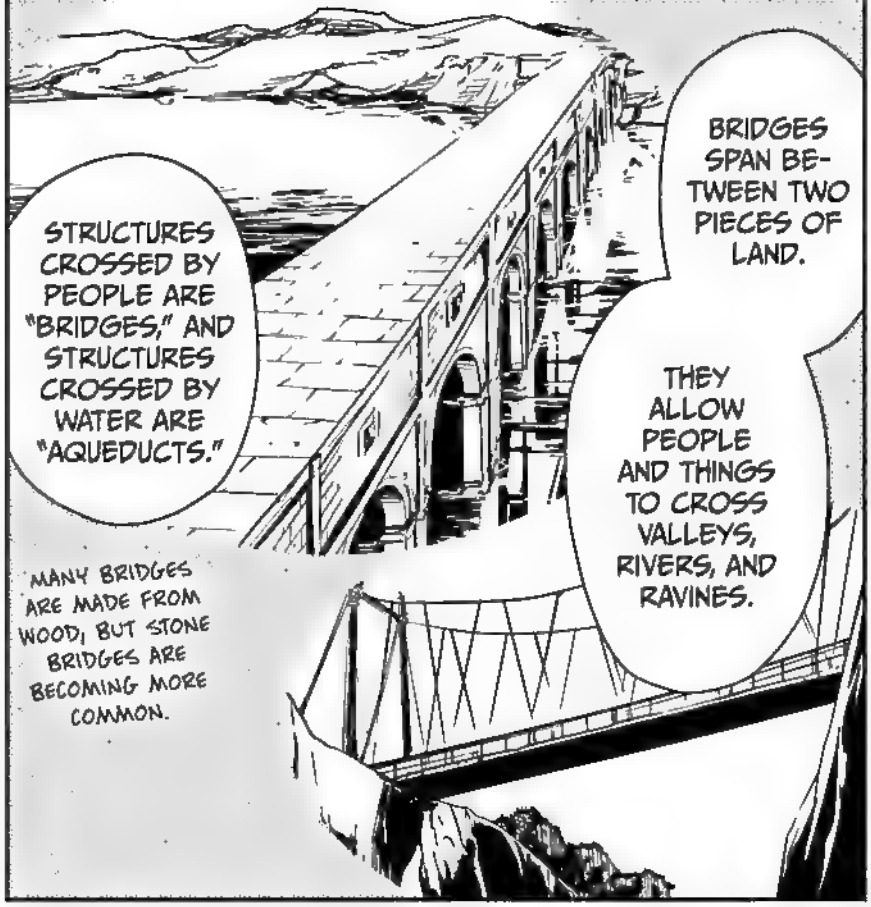
AN ENGINEER?
NOT MANY PEOPLE HAVE HEARD OF THEM.
?


YES.
I'M AN ENGINEER.
YOU'RE INTERESTED IN CITY STREETS?


IT'S MY JOB TO DESIGN MASSIVE STRUCTURES A SINGLE PERSON CAN'T BUILD ALONE.
I EVEN CHANGE THE SHAPE OF MOUNTAINS TO PREPARE FOR DISASTERS.
I DESIGN DIKES, ROADS, WALLS, AND CASTLES.
I DESIGN IRRIGATION SYSTEMS TO BRING WATER TO FARMS AND PLANT TREES.


IF ENOUGH PEOPLE PASS THROUGH A PLACE, IT EVENTUALLY BECOMES A ROAD...
...BUT THE PROCESS OF DELIBERATELY CREATING ROADS IS QUITE PROFOUND.
ROADS NATURALLY FORM IN EASILY NAVIGABLE PLACES WITHOUT INTERVENTION.


EVEN ROADS?
EVEN ROADS.

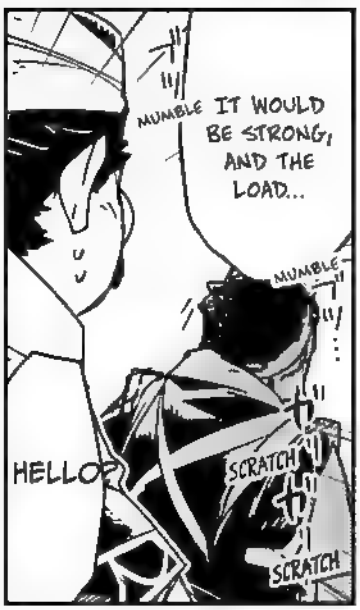

BRIDGES SPAN BETWEEN TWO PIECES OF LAND.
THEY ALLOW PEOPLE AND THINGS TO CROSS VALLEYS, RIVERS, AND RAVINES.
STRUCTURES CROSSED BY PEOPLE ARE "BRIDGES," AND STRUCTURES CROSSED BY WATER ARE "AQUEDUCTS."
MANY BRIDGES ARE MADE FROM WOOD, BUT STONE BRIDGES ARE BECOMING MORE COMMON.

WHAT ABOUT BRIDGES?
YEAH.
BRIDGES ARE IMPORTANT TOO!

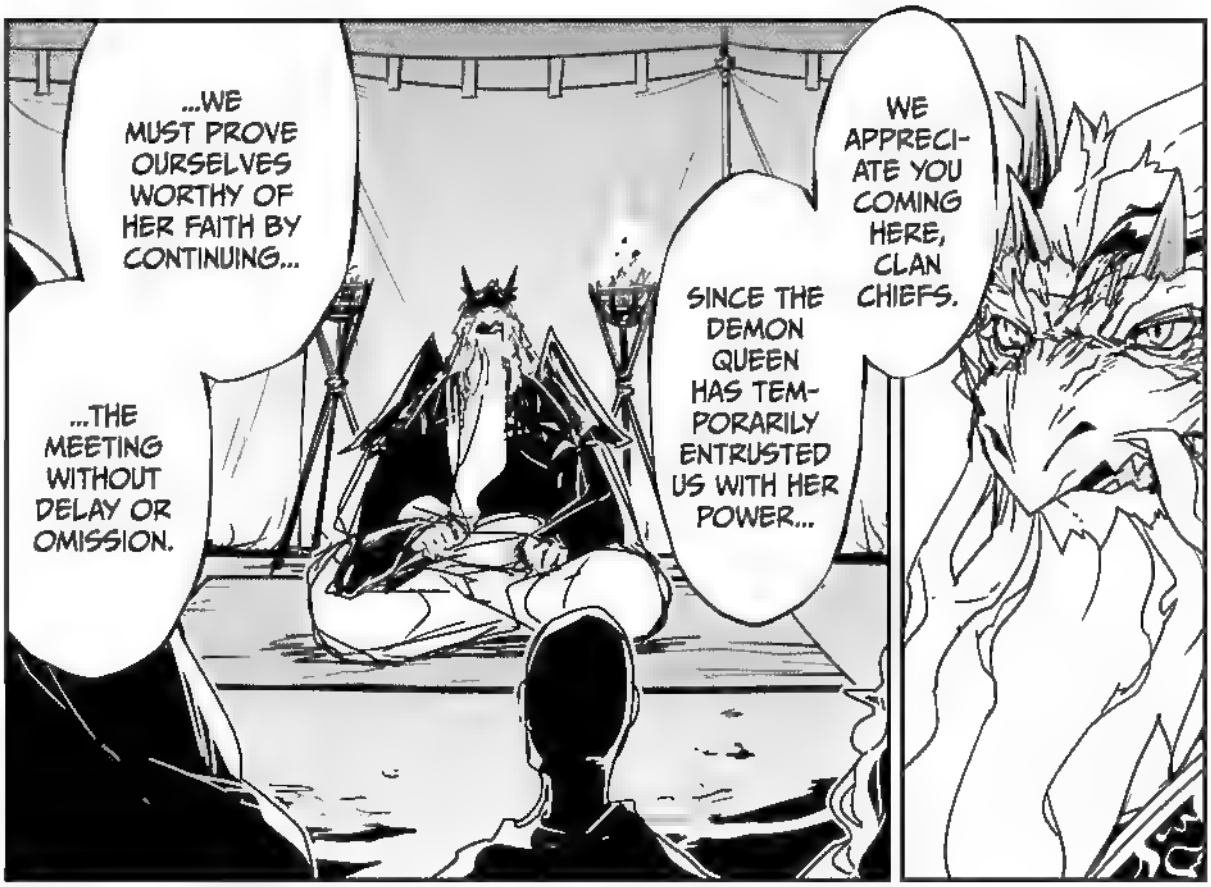
IF YOU COULD MAKE ROPE FROM METAL..
MUMBLE
...YOU COULD CREATE SOMETHING UNPRECEDENTED.
MUMBLE
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
NO, WAIT. IN THIS AGE...
MUMBLE
NO, IN THE FUTURE IT WOULD PROBABLY BE POSSIBLE TO CONSTRUCT IRON BRIDGES.
MUMBLE

A CONSTRUCTION SITE?
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN BRIDGES AND ROADS...
...WHY DON'T YOU COME SEE OUR CONSTRUCTION SITE?

OH!
I'M SORRY!
I GOT LOST IN MY OWN THOUGHTS.


MUMBLE
IT WOULD BE STRONG, AND THE LOAD...
MUMBLE
HELLO?
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

WE'RE TRYING TO BUILD A BRIDGE RIGHT NOW...
...IN A PLACE WHERE THE SKY AND GROUND SWITCH PLACES.
A BRIDGE LIKE NO ONE'S EVER SEEN.

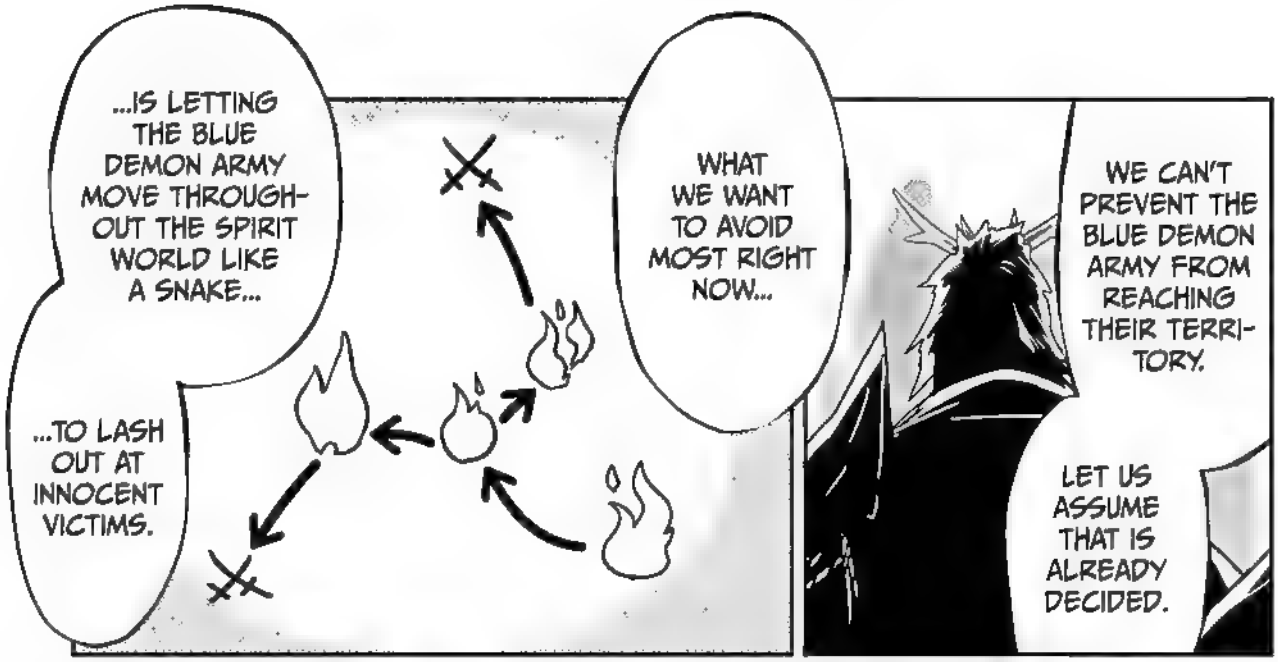

WE APPRECIATE YOU COMING HERE, CLAN CHIEFS.
SINCE THE DEMON QUEEN HAS TEMPORARILY ENTRUSTED US WITH HER POWER...
...WE MUST PROVE OURSELVES WORTHY OF HER FAITH BY CONTINUING...
...THE MEETING WITHOUT DELAY OR OMISSION.

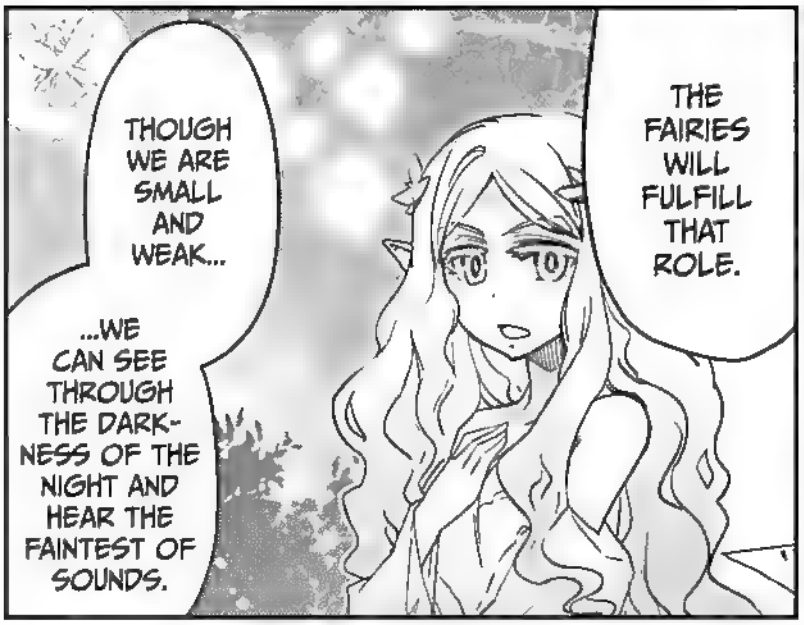
FIRST ...
...THE BLUE DEMON CLAN HAS A NEW KING.
THE MOST PRESSING MATTER IS THE PROB-LEM WITH THE BLUE DEMON CLAN.
LET US GO OVER THE SITUATION FIRST.
SECOND ...
...THE ARMY LED BY THE NEW KING...
...DREW BOWS AGAINST THE DEMON QUEEN...
...AND SECEDED FROM THE KURULTAI.
THIRD...
...THE NEW KING AND HIS ARMY...
...ARE CURRENTLY HEADED TOWARD THEIR OWN TERRITORY.
THERE ARE ROUGHLY 10,000 OF THEM.
DEMON QUEEN'S CASTLE
MACHINE CITY
KURULTAI GROUNDS
GIANT MOUNTAIN
BEASTMAN PLAINS
HUMANOID VALLEY
OGRE CALL PRAIRIE
FAIRY FOREST
BLUE DEMON LAND
DRAGON MOUNTAIN RANGE
GATEWAY CITY

WHAT?
AREN'T THE BLUE DEMONS TRAITORS?
WHICH MEANS THE QUESTION IS...
...THE WILL OF THE BLUE DEMON CLAN AS A WHOLE.
WE CAN'T BE SURE.
THE CROWNING OF THE NEW KING OF BLUE DEMONS...
...DURING THE KURULTAI WAS AN ANOMALY...
...AND SEEMED RUSHED.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'S POSSIBLE THE BLUE DEMON HOME COUNTRY...
...DOESN'T KNOW THE NEW KING BETRAYED THE DEMON QUEEN.
DRAWING BOWS AGAINST THE DEMON QUEEN AND KURULTAI...
...MAY HAVE BEEN THE NEW KING AND HIS ASSOCIATES ACTING INDEPENDENTLY.

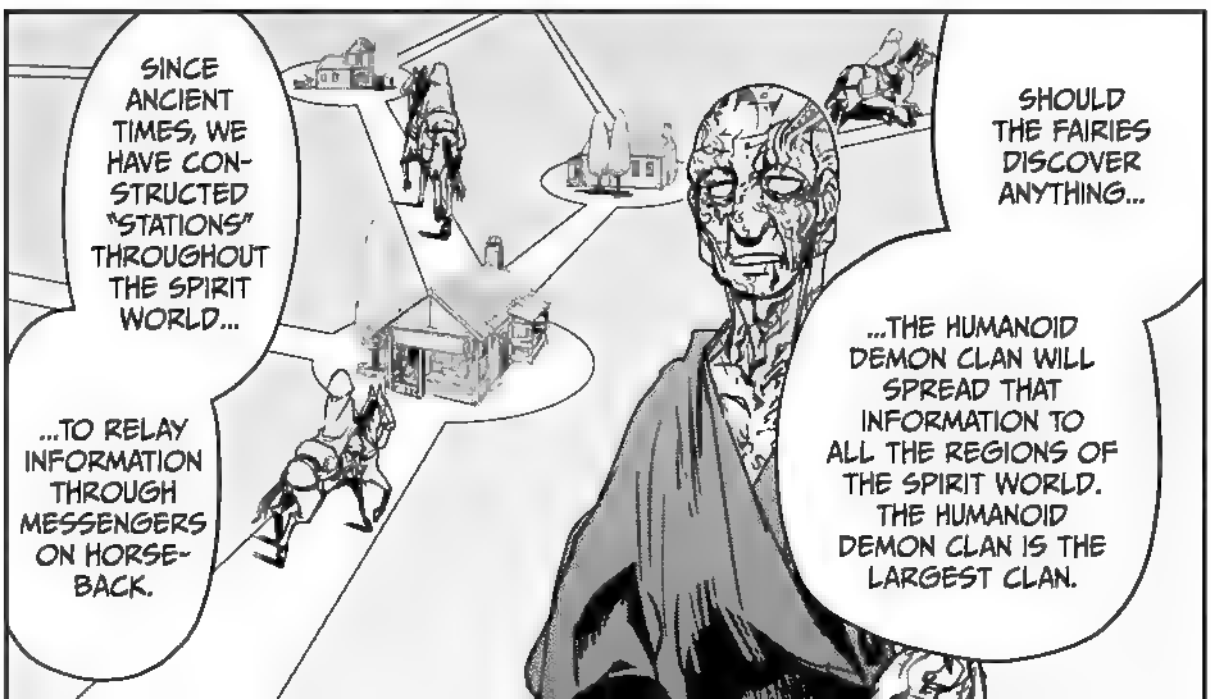
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...
...ARCH-DUKE?
THAT SEEMS OBVIOUS TO ME.
THE BLUE DEMON ARMY IS RETURNING TO ITS TERRITORY TOO QUICKLY.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO FOLLOW THEM, MUCH LESS CUT THEM OFF.
THE SPEED OF THEIR MARCH TELLS US...
...THE BLUE DEMON ARMY IS DETERMINED NOT TO LET US CATCH THEM.
IF REINFORCEMENTS WERE COMING FROM THEIR TERRITORY IN THE EVENT OF A FIGHT...
...THEY WOULDN'T NEED TO HURRY SO RECKLESSLY BACK TO THEIR CAPITAL.
IN OTHER WORDS...
...PERHAPS THEY ARE NOT IN COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THEIR CITY.
I SEE.
YOU HAVE A POINT.

IF WE MOBILIZE THE ENTIRE ARMY, OUR NUMBERS WOULD EASILY EXCEED 50,000.
THAT WOULD MEAN...
...SURROUNDING THE BLUE DEMON CAPITAL WITH THE ENTIRE ARMY MAY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.
...THE SPIRIT WORLD.
...THEY WOULD BELIEVE THEIR CLAN HAD ALREADY BETRAYED...
GATHERING THAT MANY DEMONS WOULD CAUSE DESPAIR TO SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE BLUE DEMONS.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT THEIR NEW KING REBELLED AGAINST THE DEMON QUEEN...
BLOOD WOULD BE SPILLED.
THEY WOULD BE FORCED TO SUPPORT THEIR NEW KING.
ALL THE BLUE DEMONS WOULD BE CRAZED LIKE CORNERED BEASTS.
THEY WOULD BECOME DESPER-ATE.


...IS LETTING THE BLUE DEMON ARMY MOVE THROUGHOUT THE SPIRIT WORLD LIKE A SNAKE...
...TO LASH OUT AT INNOCENT VICTIMS.
WHAT WE WANT TO AVOID MOST RIGHT NOW...
WE CAN'T PREVENT THE BLUE DEMON ARMY FROM REACHING THEIR TERRITORY.
LET US ASSUME THAT IS ALREADY DECIDED.


THOUGH WE ARE SMALL AND WEAK...
...WE CAN SEE THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT AND HEAR THE FAINTEST OF SOUNDS.
THE FAIRIES WILL FULFILL THAT ROLE.

WE MUST STATION SCOUTS OUTSIDE BLUE DEMON TERRITORY...
...AND DETECT THE BLUE DEMON ARMY'S MOVEMENTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.


SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED "STATIONS" THROUGHOUT THE SPIRIT WORLD...
...TO RELAY INFORMATION THROUGH MESSENGERS ON HORSEBACK.
SHOULD THE FAIRIES DISCOVER ANYTHING...
...THE HUMANOID DEMON CLAN WILL SPREAD THAT INFORMATION TO ALL THE REGIONS OF THE SPIRIT WORLD. THE HUMANOID DEMON CLAN IS THE LARGEST CLAN.

WE HAVE BEEN SEVERELY DISGRACED BY THIS INCIDENT!
ALLOW US TO SERVE IN THE VANGUARD!
GROWL
THE FANGED DEMONS WILL LEAD THE VAN!
SHOULD THE BLUE DEMONS DISPATCH AN ARMY...
STEP
...THE OGRE CALL CLAN'S TERRITORY SHARES THE LONGEST BORDER WITH THE BLUE DEMONS.
WE WILL FORM THE SECOND LINE.
OGRE CALL PRAIRIE
BLUE DEMON LAND
VERY WELL. YOU CAN LEAD THE VAN.
HOW-EVER...
VERY WELL.
WE MUST PROTECT OUR OWN NATION AND PEOPLE.
SHOULD THE TIME COME, PLEASE STEP BACK.
IF THE BLUE DEMONS INVADE OUR TERRITORY...
...WE CANNOT GUARANTEE YOUR PLACE IN THE VANGUARD.

I HAVE TWO REQUESTS.
THEY'RE REGARDING THE IMMIGRANTS.
THERE SHOULD BE A FEW BLUE DEMONS LIVING IN VARIOUS CITIES.
I'D LIKE TO ASK THAT THEY BE PROTECTED.
WITH REGARDS TO A BATTLE, YOU'RE RIGHT.
THEY WILL NOT AFFECT THE SITUATION.
BEEP
WHY WOULD YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
THERE ARE NOT MANY OF THEM.
BZZ
BUT THIS IS FOR WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE WAR.
WE NEED WITNESSES TO PROVE WE DIDN'T GANG UP ON THE BLUE DEMONS...
...AND WIPE THEM OUT.

EVEN IN THIS BATTLE...
...WE CAN'T MASSACRE EVERY LAST BLUE DEMON INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
IT WOULD BE UNJUST.
IF THAT HAPPENS, THE SURVIVING BLUE DEMONS WOULD RESENT US.

DEPENDING ON HOW THINGS GO...
...THEY MIGHT TELL THEIR DESCENDANTS THE OTHER CLANS ATTACKED THE BLUE DEMONS OUT OF FEAR...
...WHEN THEY HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG.

HMPH.
I SEE.
WHAT IS YOUR OTHER CONCERN?
REASSURING THE PEOPLE OF OUR OWN CLANS.

THEY FEEL POWER-LESS...
...AND INSIGNIF-ICANT.
...THEY FEEL AS THOUGH THEY CAN'T DO ANY-THING.
IF THEY DON'T UNDER-STAND WHAT THEIR NATION OR ARMY IS DOING...
THE MOST DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE FOR A COMMON PERSON TO ENDURE IS NOT KNOWING WHAT HE'S DOING.
THEY GRADUALLY DECAY.
HMM
OOH
I SEE
CREAK
IT MAKES CITIES, PEOPLE, AND INDUSTRIES DECAY.
THE CITIES WILL SINK INTO TERRIBLE CONDITIONS.

WE HAVE TO TELL THEM...
...HOW THIS SITUATION CAME ABOUT...
...HOW BAD THE SITUATION IS...
...HOW MUCH HOPE THERE IS, AND HOW WE CAN RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

THIS IS A WAR, THOUGH.
WE CAN'T TELL THEM THE WHOLE TRUTH.
HMPH.
IS THIS WHAT YOU MEAN?

ALL CITIZENS ARE WARRIORS REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT THEY PARTICIPATE IN BATTLE.
AS GENERALS, WE MUST KEEP THEIR MORALE HIGH.
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT...
...MR. TIGER.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
WE'LL TELL THE PEOPLE...
...THE NEW BLUE DEMON KING BETRAYED AND ATTACKED THE KURULTAI.
FIRST WE...
...TELL THEM...
...WITH LOUD VOICES.
...AND THE PLACES THEY LIVE ARE SAFE.
...THAT THE BLUE DEMONS HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR TERRITORY...
WE WILL TELL THOSE WHO FEAR THE PROSPECT OF A WAR...
THAT SOUNDS LIKE AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.
TO BE SAFE, WE CAN INCREASE THE NUMBER OF GUARDS.
IT WILL BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK WITH OUR PEOPLE.
THE COMMANDER.
HE HAS GOOD FORESIGHT AND SHARP EYE.

OUT-COME.
...WHAT OUTCOME WE SEEK IN OUR BATTLE AGAINST THE BLUE DEMONS.
...IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO CON-SIDER...
HOW-EVER...
...IN THAT CASE...
...AND WHAT OUTCOME DO WE ULTIMATELY SEEK?
WHAT SHOULD WE DO...
SHOULD WE INVADE THEIR TER-RITORY AND CONQUER IT?
SHOULD WE STRIKE AT THEM ONCE THEY LEAVE THEIR TERRITORY?
RUSTLE
THIS IS HOW WE'LL HANDLE THE BLUE DEMONS FOR NOW.
WE'LL KEEP EACH OTHER INFORMED ON THE MOVEMENTS OF THE BLUE DEMONS.
EACH CLAN SHOULD THINK ON THE OUT-COME THEY DESIRE...
...AND SHARE IT WITH THE OTHERS.
...WANTED US TO THINK ABOUT OUR OWN FUTURES OURSELVES.
PERHAPS THE DEMON QUEEN...

BOOM
WHERE IS HE?
PROBABLY AT THE SITE AGAIN
ROAR
IF NOTHING UNEXPECTED OCCURS, WE WILL MEET AGAIN IN 40 DAYS!
THIS CONCLUDES THIS MEETING!
SHE CAN'T GET OUT OF BED...
...BUT HER MOUTH SEEMS TO BE FEELING FINE.
HOW IS THE DEMON QUEEN?
I'LL TELL HER THE RESULTS OF TODAY'S MEETING NOW.
THAT'S GREAT NEWS.

THAT'S QUITE A VIEW!

YES.

IT NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME.

WOW!

WHY ARE THOSE GIANT ROCKS FLOATING?

AND WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

IT'S STRANGE, ISN'T IT?

BOOM

BOOM

BOOM

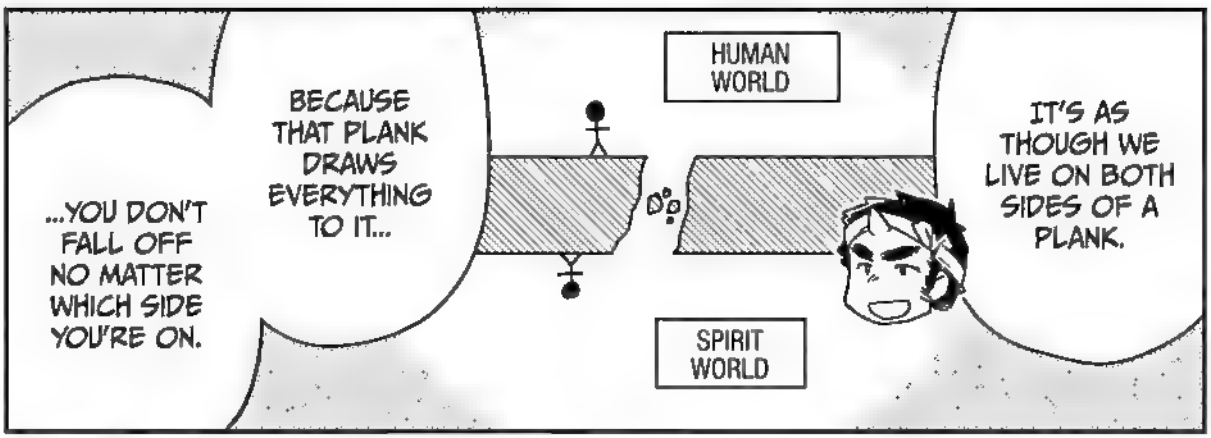
BOOM

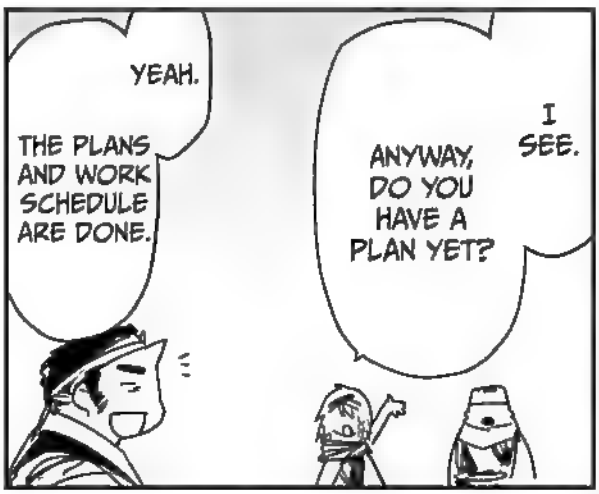
WHOOSH

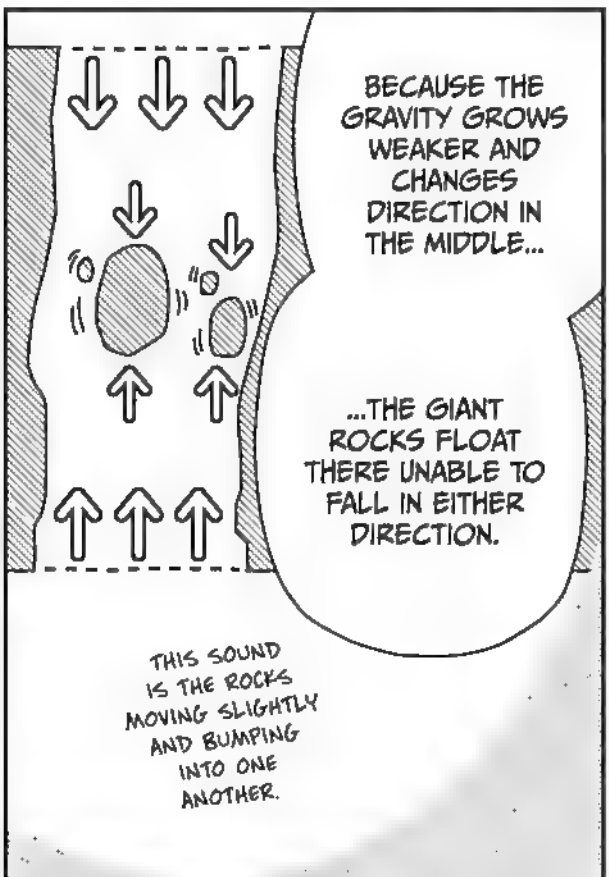
BOOM
BOOM

THAT'S QUITE A VIEW!
YES.
IT NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME.
ROAR
WHY ARE THOSE GIANT ROCKS FLOATING?
AND WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
IT'S STRANGE, ISN'T IT?
BOOM
BOOM
WHOOSH

HEY, YOU'RE HERE.
YOU LOOK AWFUL! DID YOU STAY UP ALL NIGHT AGAIN?
YOU DUMB ENGI-NEER!
BUT THIS PLACE IS AMAZING.
OF COURSE I'M EXCITED.


HUMAN WORLD
SPIRIT WORLD
IT'S AS THOUGH WE LIVE ON BOTH SIDES OF A PLANK.
BECAUSE THAT PLANK DRAWS EVERYTHING TO IT...
...YOU DON'T FALL OFF NO MATTER WHICH SIDE YOU'RE ON.


I SEE.
ANYWAY, DO YOU HAVE A PLAN YET?
YEAH.
THE PLANS AND WORK SCHEDULE ARE DONE.

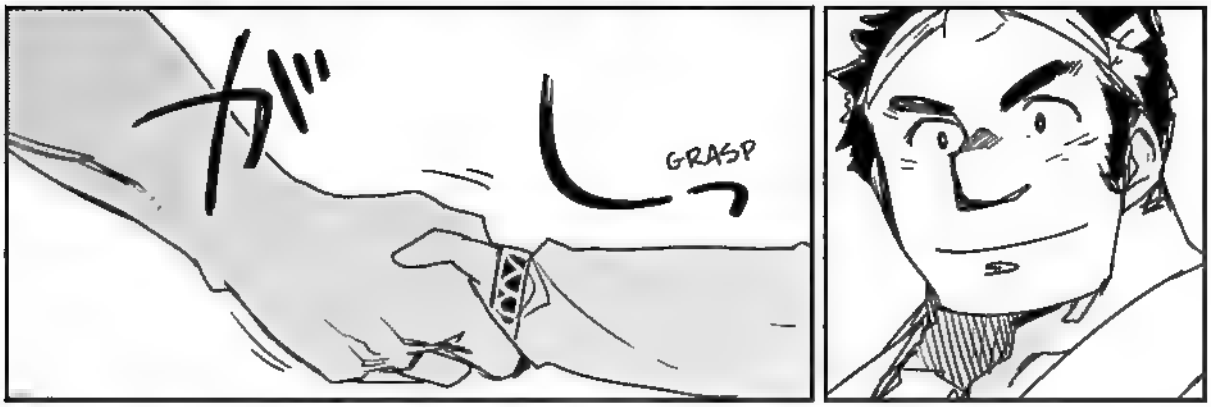

BECAUSE THE GRAVITY GROWS WEAKER AND CHANGES DIRECTION IN THE MIDDLE...
...THE GIANT ROCKS FLOAT THERE UNABLE TO FALL IN EITHER DIRECTION.
THIS SOUND IS THE ROCKS MOVING SLIGHTLY AND BUMPING INTO ONE ANOTHER.

WHAT?
DID I NOT TELL YOU?

I EXAMINED THE GEOLOGY AND CAME UP WITH A FEW ROUTES.
THIS RED LINE...
...WOULD TAKE FOUR MONTHS TO CONSTRUCT. THE BRIDGE IS COMPOSED OF 12 PARTS. ONE IS MADE OF STONE, AND THE REST ARE MADE OF WOOD.
THIS PLAN REQUIRES THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF TIME AND LABOR AND CAN PROBABLY BE CROSSED BY MEDIUM SIZED CARRIAGES.
THIS DOUBLE LINE IS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY.
THIS ONE REQUIRES LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION.
THE ROAD IS WIDE AND STURDY. THE BRIDGE HAS 30 PARTS.
ALL THE PARTS ARE MADE FROM STONE, AND IT WOULD TAKE ROUGHLY EIGHT YEARS TO CONSTRUCT.

YOU CAME UP WITH TWO IDEAS?
MORE PLANS ARE BETTER IN THIS SITUATION.
WE NEED TO TAKE CAPITAL, CONSTRUCTION TIME, AND OTHER FACTORS INTO ACCOUNT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK? SHOULD I CHANGE--
WE'LL START WITH THE FOUR-MONTH ONE.
BLUNT
THAT WAS QUICK!

EXTEND
YES.
I NEED A ROAD A CARRIAGE CAN CROSS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
THAT WAS A QUICK DECISION.


GRASP

SO AM I.
I AP-PRECIATE YOUR WORK.
I'M GLAD I MET YOU!

TO A ROAD SPANNING TWO WORLDS!

SHEESH. AT LEAST PUT YOUR PLANS DOWN WHILE YOU EAT.
SQUEAK
もきゅ
SQUEAK

YOU REALLY ARE AN ENGI-NEERING FANATIC.
SORRY. I KEEP COMING UP WITH NEW CONSTRUCTION METHODS AND PLANS.

....
YOU'RE A STRANGE ONE.
THE BRIDGE IS?
I CAN'T HELP IT.
THE BRIDGE IS ASKING ME TO BUILD IT SOON.

YEAH.
WHAT?
AREN'T YOU THE SAME?
MUSIC ALWAYS OVER-FLOWS FROM YOU.

I HEAR THEM BEGGING TO BE BORN.
...RE-SOUND MAJESTI-CALLY.
...AND ZINKS...
... LYRES ...
...FID-DLES...
INSIDE MY HEART...
...IN THEIR SEARCH FOR LIFE.
WORD-LESS VOICES CREATE HARMO-NIES...

THEIR WORDS ENTICE ME.
...BUT I'VE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT IT IN GATEWAY CITY.
I DON'T KNOW MUCH, EITHER...
WUMPH
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE "HOLY RELIC"?
HUH?
NO.

I'M NOT SURE WHEN I'LL BE BACK.
YES.
IS IT ON THE SURFACE?
ARE YOU GOING FAR?
I WANT TO GO.

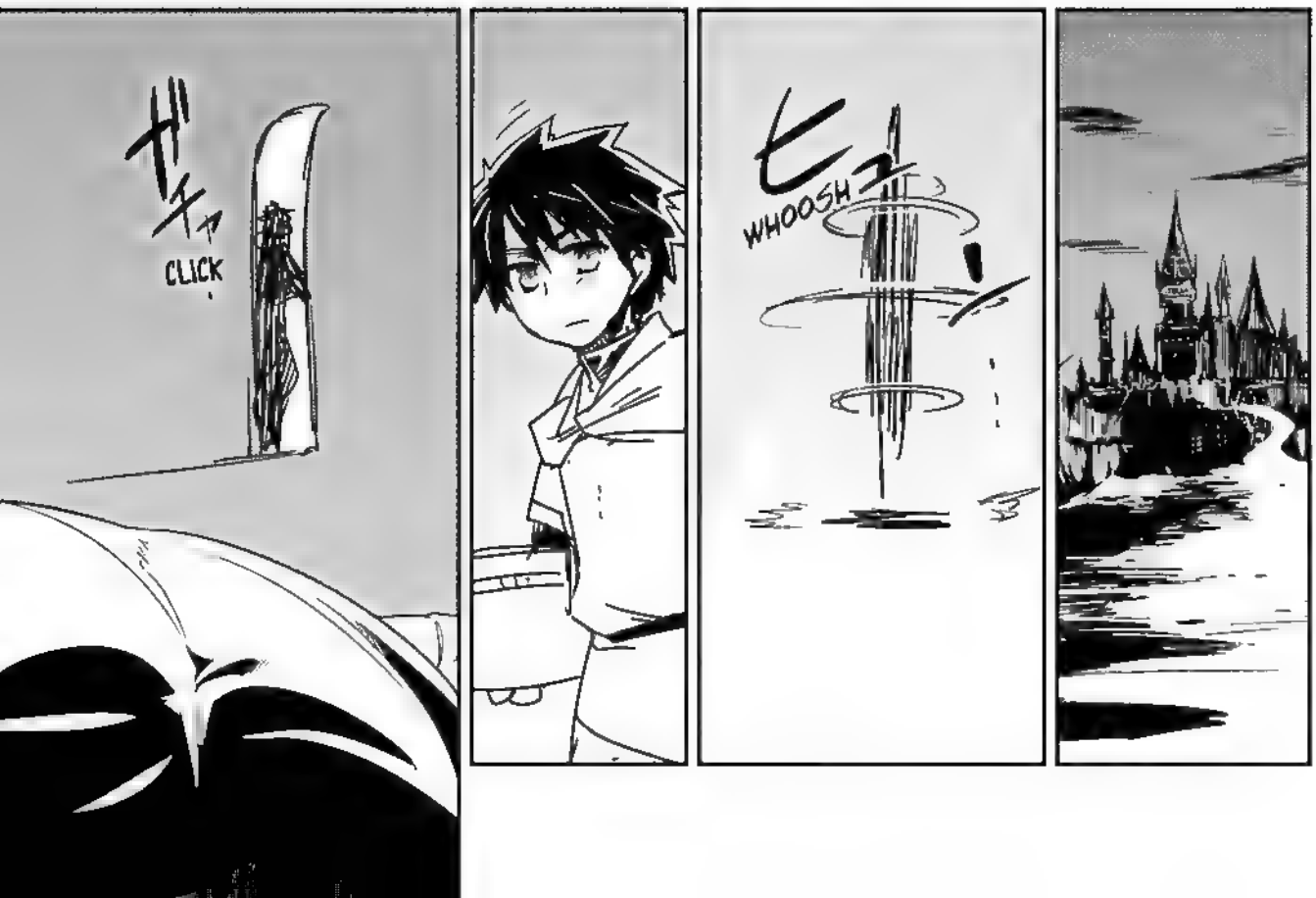
BUT YOU'LL COME BACK, RIGHT?

MY BRIDGE ...
...CAN SEND YOU ON THAT JOURNEY...
...AND IT CAN BRING YOU HOME.

MY BRIDGE WILL WAIT FOR YOU TO COME HOME.
NATURALLY, SO WILL I.
OKAY.

GO SEE A TON OF AMAZING THINGS.
I WILL.
I'LL HEAR A LOT OF AMAZING SOUNDS TOO.
LET'S MEET AGAIN IN THIS CITY.
IT'S A PROM-ISE.

YEAH.
OUR PROMISE IS ABSO-LUTE.
WE ARE THE CRIMSON YOUTH.
CLINK


CLICK
WHOOSH

SNORE
SNORE
SHE SEEMS TO BE RECOVERING.
HER COLOR HAS IMPROVED TOO.

REACH
UHHN.
MMM
TWITCH
SQUISH
OH.
YOU'RE HERE, HERO.
WHY ARE YOU STANDING WAY OVER THERE?
YEAH.
I JUST GOT HERE.
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP

I'M BORED!
SCREAM
SHRIEK
YOU SHOULD REST.
MAYBE I CAN GET OUT OF BED SOON.
IT DOESN'T HURT ANY-MORE.
HOW ARE YOU FEEL-ING?
JIGGLE
WHAT IS IT?
IT'S FRESH
I BROUGHT YOU SOME-THING.
RUSTLE
!!
BITE
IT'S THE YOUNGER MAID SISTER'S NEWEST WORK, CUSTARD PUDDING.
TRY IT.
WHAT IS THIS?

GLOW
IT'S SO GOOD.
IT'S SWEET!
IT'S DELI-CIOUS!
SHOVEL
SHOVEL
SIT UP
IS THE SAUCE MADE FROM FRUIT?
HOW NOVEL.
IT'S COLD AND MELTS IN YOUR MOUTH.
I'VE NEVER HAD ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
THE CHIEF MAID TOLD ME COOKING IS AN ESSENTIAL FUNCTION OF A MAID...
...BUT SOMETIMES HER ATTACHMENT TO COOKING RIVALS THE DRIVE OF HIGH-CLASS DEMONS.
I'M AMAZED BY THE YOUNGER MAID SISTER'S PASSION FOR COOKING.
I KNOW.

THAT'S NOT TRUE.
PERHAPS THE CHIEF MAID WOULD HAVE MADE A BETTER TEACHER.
I KNOW.
BOTH THE OLDER AND YOUNGER MAID SISTERS HAVE MADE INCREDIBLE PROGRESS.
OH.
THEY SURPRISE ME EVERY TIME I READ THEIR REPORTS.
THOSE THREE KIDS ARE DOING PROPER GOVERNMENT WORK NOW.
I ABANDONED THEM ONCE YOU ARRIVED.
TEE HEE
WHAT?
SERI-OUSLY?
...I HAD SOME DISCIPLES IN THE SPIRIT WORLD TOO.
COME TO THINK OF IT...!

I FEEL BAD FOR THEM.
IT'S TOUGH TO LEARN SKILLS WITHOUT APPLYING THEM.
YOU HAVE A PRETTY HANDS-OFF POLICY.
HMMM
I'M SURE THEY'RE STILL ALIVE.
THEY'RE GOOD KIDS TOO.
WHAT?
HERE.
HMM?
YOU HAD CUSTARD ON YOUR FACE.
LICK
DID I?
THAT WAS GOOD.
YOU SEEM TO LIKE IT.

DON'T PUT ME THROUGH THAT AGAIN.
BEING INJURED ISN'T SO BAD ONCE IN A WHILE.
YOU'RE SO NICE TO ME.

YOU CAN HAVE HALF OF MINE.
ARE YOU SURE?
I'LL HAVE SOME, THEN.
RUSTLE
...

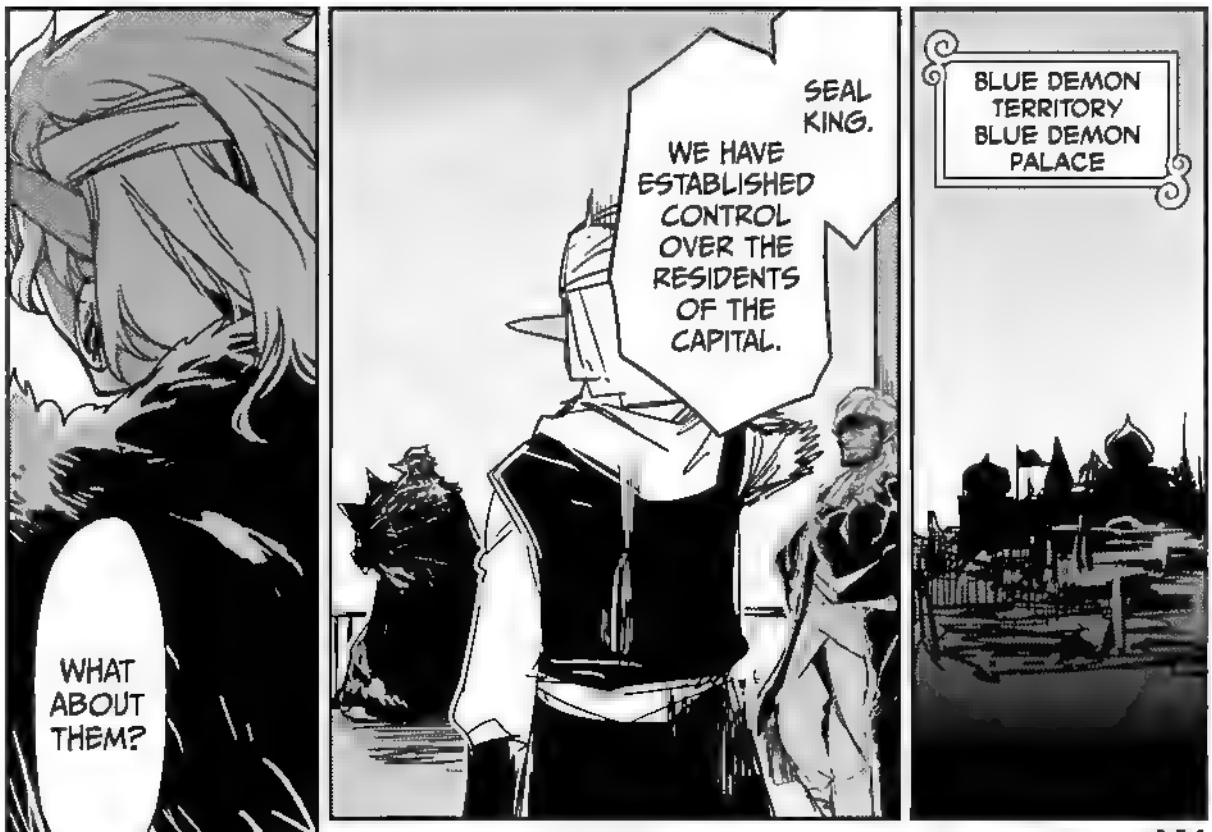
UH...
GAAH

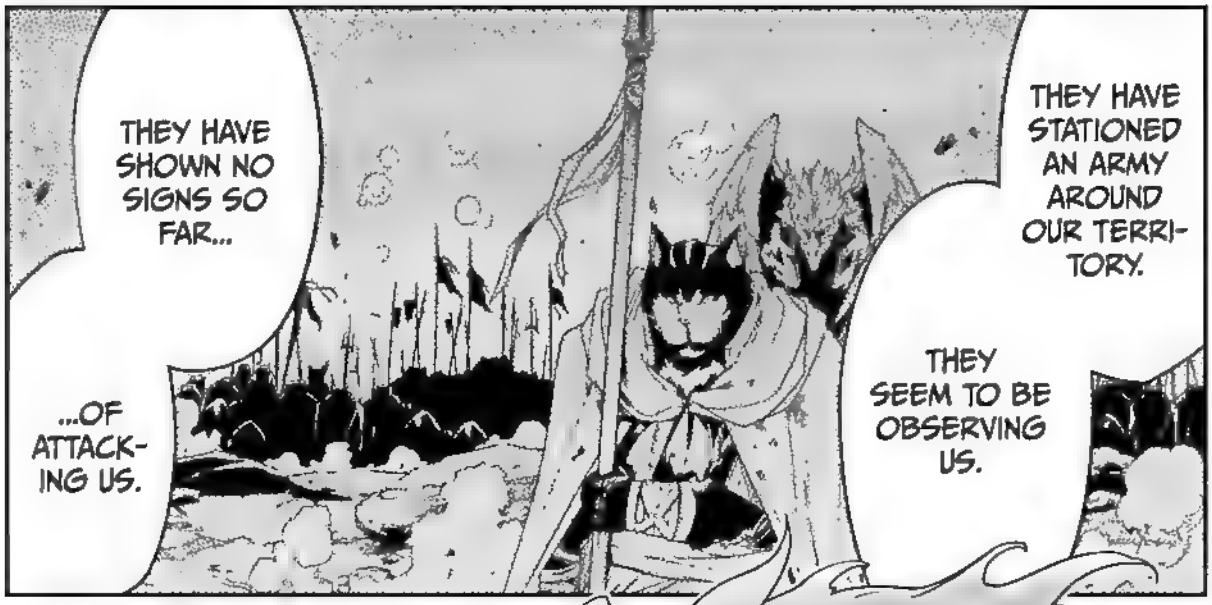
HERE.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OBJEC-TIONS WITH MY PERFECT LOGIC?
NO!
IT'S YOUR PUDDING! YOU SHOULD SERVE IT TO ME!
OKAY! OKAY!
UH...

CHOMP
AAAH
THIS IS TRULY EXCEP-TIONAL.
BA-DUMP
HERE. YOU HAVE CREAM ON YOUR FACE AGAIN.
PULL
THE PUDDING ON YOUR FINGER BELONGS TO ME AS WELL.
IF YOU SAY HALF, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE TO GIVE ME HALF.
BREAKING A PROMISE IS A BETRAYAL OF TRUST.
SO GOOD!
LICK

WHAT'S WRONG, HERO?
....
NOTH-ING!
I NEED TO GIVE THE CHIEF MAID HER PUDDING!
?
SLAM
STOMP
STOMP

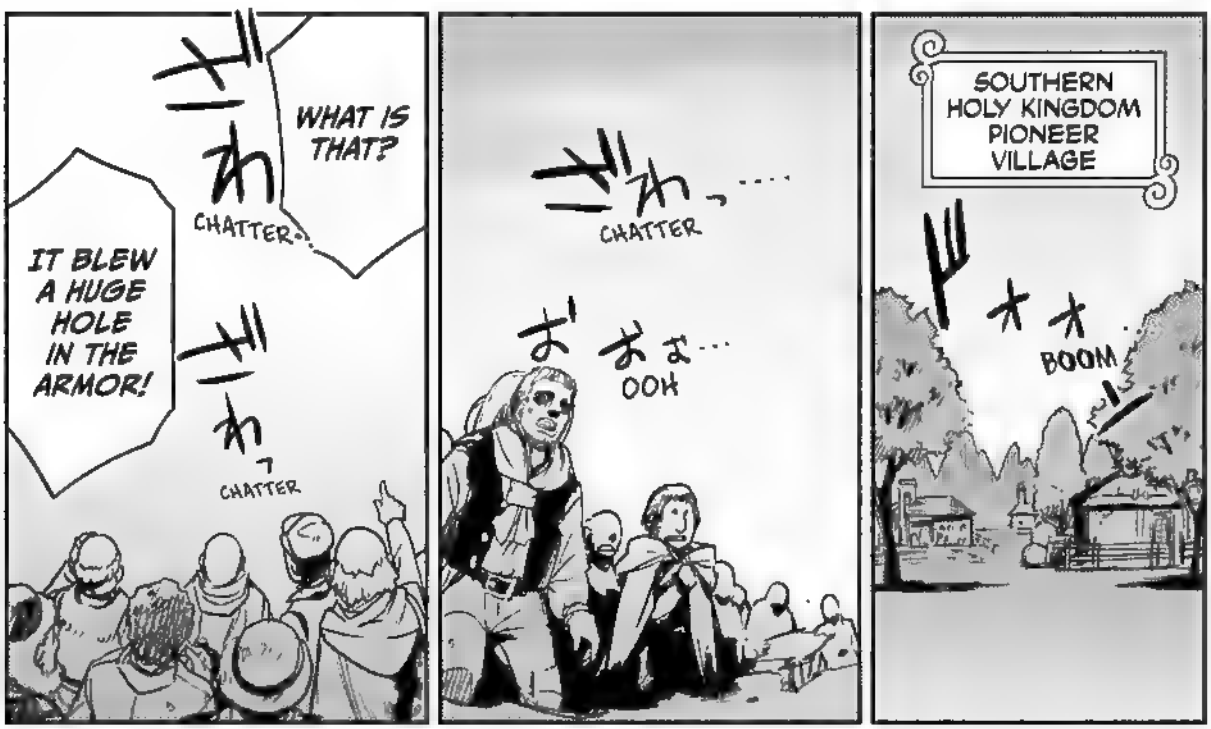

BLUE DEMON TERRITORY BLUE DEMON PALACE
SEAL KING.
WE HAVE ESTABLISHED CONTROL OVER THE RESIDENTS OF THE CAPITAL.
WHAT ABOUT THEM?


THEY HAVE SHOWN NO SIGNS SO FAR...
...OF ATTACKING US.
THEY HAVE STATIONED AN ARMY AROUND OUR TERRITORY.
THEY SEEM TO BE OBSERVING US.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

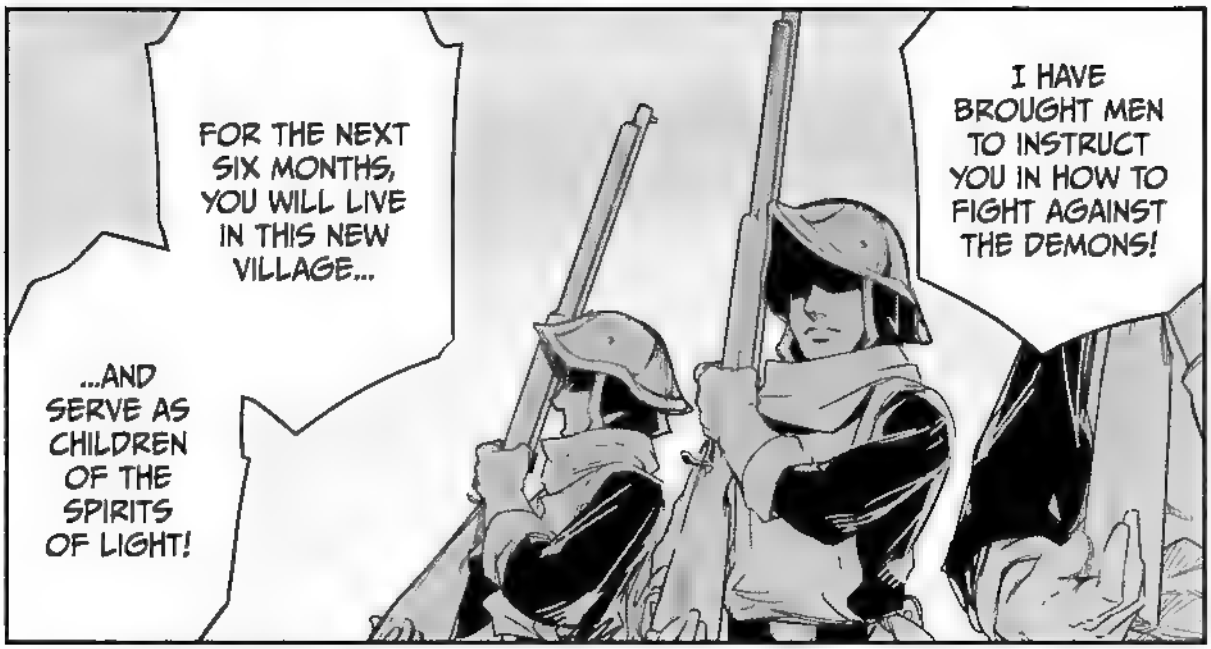
HMPH.
THE COWARDS.

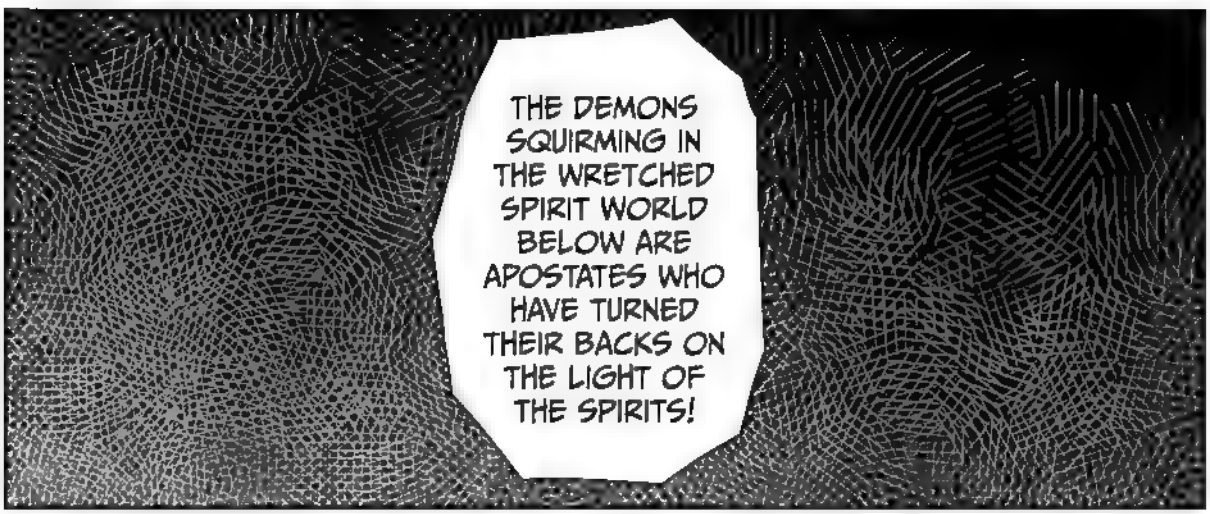
THOUGH IT'S A BIT AHEAD OF SCHED-ULE...
...WE'LL MOVE FORWARD WITH THAT PLAN.
ARE WE STILL IN TOUCH WITH THEM?
YES.
HOW-EVER...
...WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY WANT THOSE?


WHAT IS THAT?
CHATTER...
IT BLEW A HUGE HOLE IN THE ARMOR!
CHATTER
CHATTER
OOH
SOUTHERN HOLY KINGDOM PIONEER VILLAGE
BOOM

RATTLE
RATTLE
ROAR
DO YOU SEE, CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT?
THIS IS THE POWER OF THE SPIRITS!
THESE METAL STICKS...
...ARE THE MUSKETS GRANTED TO US BY THE SPIRITS OF LIGHT TO KILL THE DEMONS!
WITH THESE METAL STICKS...
...EVEN YOU CAN FIGHT ON THE BATTLE-FIELD LIKE SEASONED VETERANS!

THERE ARE FARMS IN THIS VILLAGE...
...AND ENOUGH FOOD SUPPLIES TO SUPPORT YOU!
I HAVE GATHERED YOU HERE...
...TO PREPARE YOU FOR THE UPCOMING BATTLE AGAINST EVIL!

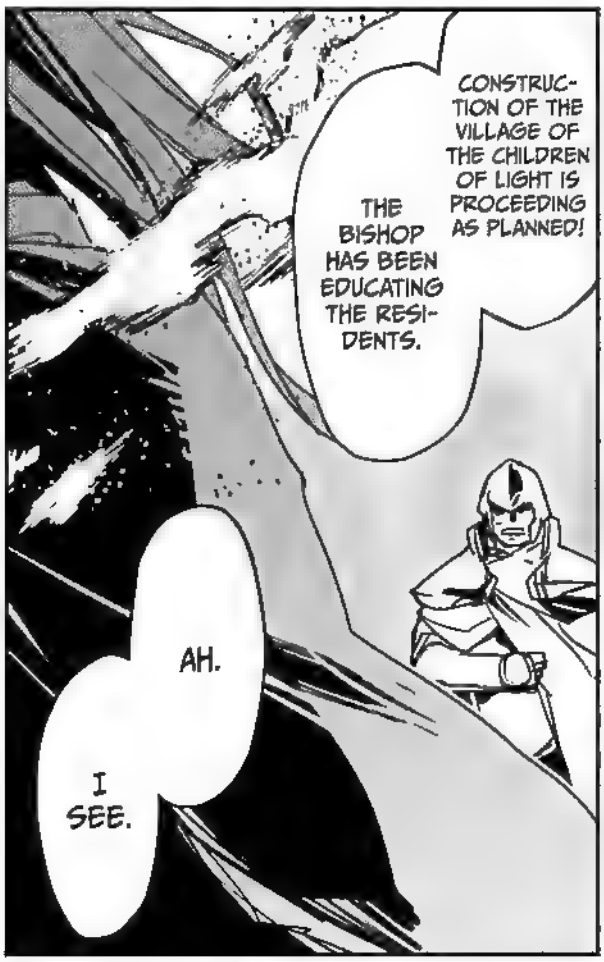

FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, YOU WILL LIVE IN THIS NEW VILLAGE...
...AND SERVE AS CHILDREN OF THE SPIRITS OF LIGHT!
I HAVE BROUGHT MEN TO INSTRUCT YOU IN HOW TO FIGHT AGAINST THE DEMONS!


THE DEMONS SQUIRMING IN THE WRETCHED SPIRIT WORLD BELOW ARE APOSTATES WHO HAVE TURNED THEIR BACKS ON THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRITS!

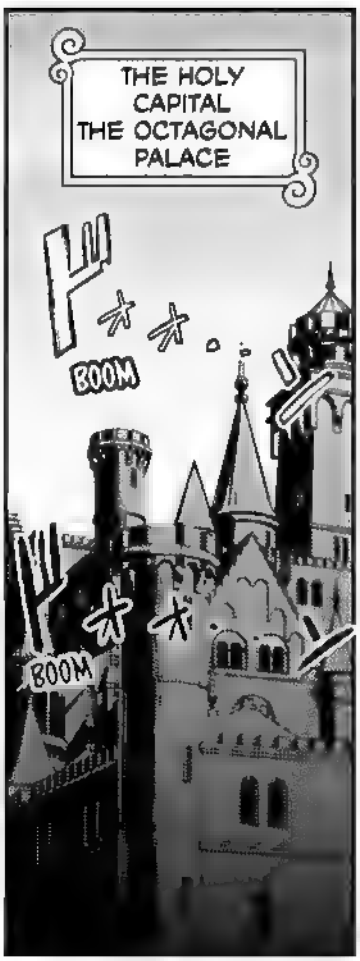
THEY ARE THE REMAINS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF LIGHT...
...THE HOLY RELIC!
CHATTER
CHATTER
THE APOSTATES HAVE STOLEN THE TREASURE OF THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT...
...AND CONTINUE TO SCHEME AGAINST US!
IN ORDER TO DISGRACE THE HOLY RELIC...
...THEY HAVE STOLEN IT FROM US AND HIDDEN IT!
OOH
CHEER
...HAVE STOLEN THE HOPE OF THE FAITHFUL AND SYMBOL OF HIS RESURRECTION!
THE DEMONS WHO TURNED THEIR BACKS ON THEIR TEACHINGS...
OOH
ROAR
WE MUST TAKE BACK THE HOLY RELIC EVEN IF IT COSTS US OUR LIVES!
WE CANNOT LET THIS OFFENSE GO UNPUNISHED!
THE ARCHBISHOP HIMSELF HAS SPOKEN!

CHEER
IT IS TIME TO UNITE THE POWER OF THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LIGHT!

THIS IS YOUR HOLY DUTY!
TAKE UP YOUR MUSKETS AND STAND!


CONSTRUCTION OF THE VILLAGE OF THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT IS PROCEEDING AS PLANNED!
THE BISHOP HAS BEEN EDUCATING THE RESIDENTS.
AH.
I SEE.

I HAVE A REPORT!
STEP


THE HOLY CAPITAL THE OCTAGONAL PALACE
BOOM
BOOM

I AM.
YOU MUST CONSIDER YOUR POSITION.
THERE'S A RISK OF EXPLOSION.
ARE YOU TESTING THEM AGAIN?
A LEADER MUST KNOW THE CAPABILITY OF THE WEAPON HE USES.
HE KNOWS HOW TO MANIPULATE HIS FOLLOWERS.
THE ARCHBISHOP IS QUITE THE CAPABLE LEADER.
IT'S AN AMUSING EXCUSE.
ANYWAY, THE HOLY RELIC, WAS IT?

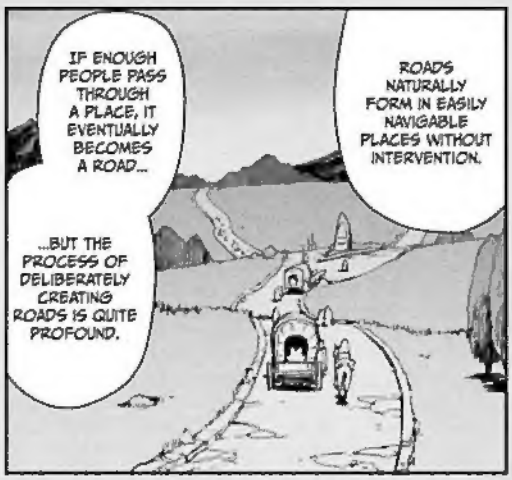
HURRY THE PRODUCTION OF MUSKETS AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE VILLAGE OF THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT.
THE HOLY KINGDOM...
...WILL CLAIM THE CONTINENT.

THE END

CHAPTER 31
We are the Crimson Youth

THE DEVELOPMENT AND INFLUENCE OF ROADS

Roads born from human traffic. They are not simply easily navigable paths, but are also closely related to the development of trade, military affairs, and nations.


IF ENOUGH PEOPLE PASS THROUGH A PLACE, IT EVENTUALLY BECOMES A ROAD...
ROADS NATURALLY FORM IN EASILY NAVIGABLE PLACES WITHOUT INTERVENTION.
...BUT THE PROCESS OF DELIBERATELY CREATING ROADS IS QUITE PROFOUND.

Creating a new road requires labor and expenses. They also require detailed plans.

PAVED ROADS BORN FROM NECESSITY

Walking in the most basic method humans use to move across land. Roads make traveling on foot easier.

The most primitive roads are "footpaths" tread into the ground by human traffic. Like "animal trails," footpaths are naturally occurring paths tread into the ground where plants have trouble growing created by human traffic between settlements and water sources or other places where many humans gather.

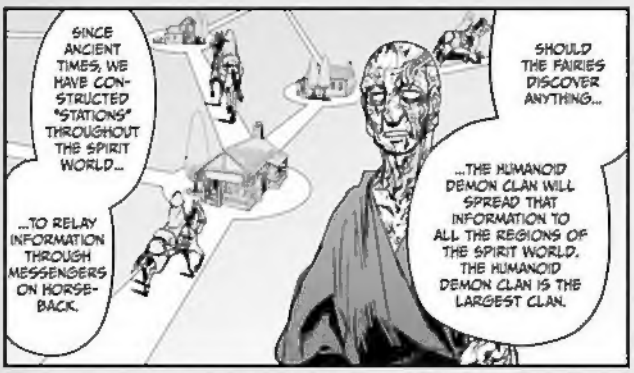
However, with the advent of the wheel and the invention of wagons and carriages, due to the unevenness and narrow width of footpaths, vehicles could not travel down them, and new roads for vehicles were constructed.

The dirt surface of these roads was exposed and susceptible to the elements, and rain turned them into soft mud. Because wagon wheels would get stuck in the mud, "paved roads" were born to eliminate this shortcoming.

The first paved roads were paved with stone. Around 1100 BCE in China, tens of thousands of kilometers of stone paved roads were being constructed. In Europe, the Roman roads constructed during the Republic of Rome are well known, and the Appian Way constructed in 312 BCE is said to be the first of these.

These large-scale projects required a considerable number of workers and the leadership of nations. Roman roads were maintained so soldiers could travel quickly. However, because maintained roads were also open to general use, the circulation of goods flourished, revitalizing trade.

Additionally, the construction of road networks improved the rate at which information was spread. In Rome, messengers on horseback carried letters, and specialized "stations" were constructed along main roads with spare horses and places to rest. Information from Northern Italy reached Rome in three days. During Augustus' reign, which began in the 20s BCE, a "postal service" was established, and many messengers traveled up and down main roads.


SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED "STATIONS" THROUGHOUT THE SPIRIT WORLD...
...TO RELAY INFORMATION THROUGH MESSENGERS ON HORSEBACK.
SHOULD THE FAIRIES DISCOVER ANYTHING...
...THE HUMANOID DEMON CLAN WILL SPREAD THAT INFORMATION TO ALL THE REGIONS OF THE SPIRIT WORLD. THE HUMANOID DEMON CLAN IS THE LARGEST CLAN.

The messenger system of the Humanoid Demon Clan likely formed because the clan's diverse population created a need to quickly determine the situation of various powers.

Rome's road network was one of the reasons it was such a powerful nation, but as their territory expanded, so did the maintenance costs, making it one of the financial causes of the collapse of the Roman Empire.

MAOYU : Archenemy and Hero
"Become mine, Hero" "I refuse!"
Volume 9

KADOKAWA MANGA

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MAOYU MAOU YUUSHA
"KONO WARENO MONOTONARE, YUUSHAYO" "KOTOWARU!"
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